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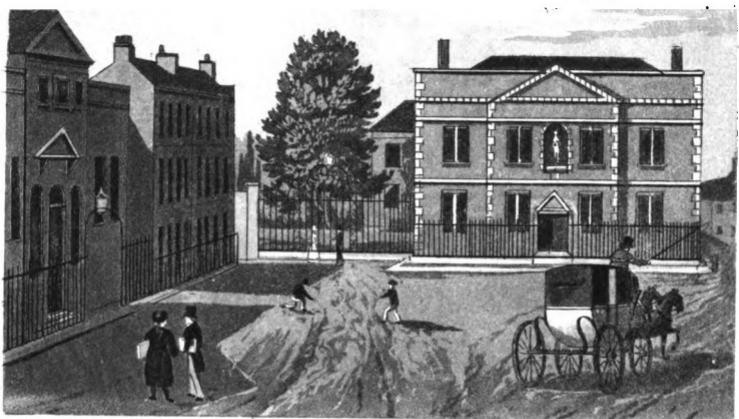








*St. Paul's Church.*



R. Harwell, Junr. Sc.

J.H.M. Del.

*The Hall and Grammat. School.*

BEDFORD  
AND ITS  
ENVIRONS;  
OR  
AN HISTORICAL AND TOPOGRAPHICAL  
*SKETCH*  
OF THE  
TOWN OF BEDFORD

And Places Adjacent,  
CONTAINING ACCOUNTS OF ITS PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS, SCHOOLS  
CHARITIES, SOCIETIES, &c. & BRIEF NOTICES OF EVERY THING  
MOST REMARKABLE AND IMPORTANT RELATING TO  
THE TOWN AND NEIGHBOURHOOD.

BY  
J. H. MATTIASON,  
AUTHOR OF "THE INFIRMARY; OR SKETCHES OF PRACTICAL  
BENEVOLENCE," &c.

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## A D V E R T I S E M E N T .

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The following work, though at first proposed merely as *A Sketch*, will be thought perhaps in general to have exceeded the limits of such a term. Guided entirely by what he felt due to the subjects under consideration, the author, by enlarging upon those of a more immediate interest, has been under the necessity of compressing, as much as possible, such as are of a more general and distant nature : a circumstance which has rendered it, doubtless, less amusing ; but he trusts proportionately more useful.

In the description,\* the original topography of 1830 has been preserved (notwithstanding a few subsequent alterations) as a means of comparing it with the improvements now in progress: and having delayed the work with the disappointed hope of being enabled to include some portion of those improvements, he has endeavoured to atone for it by extending the proposed number of his illustrations from *ten* to *twelve*: an addition which he hopes will render it more acceptable to his subscribers, to whom he takes this opportunity of expressing his warmest sense of the favour with which his labours have been supported.

\* In the minuteness of detail errors are never insignificant: the only one perhaps requiring notice, and which the general reader would not be able to perceive, is (page 33) the roof of St. John's Church being described as embattled, instead of unembattled.

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## BEDFORD,

80.

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### SITUATION AND GENERAL ADVANTAGES.

**B**EKFORD, the county town of Bedfordshire, is seated on the Ouse, about fifty miles north of London ; and from its situation in the centre of the country, possesses a facility of communication with all its various and most considerable parts which, to the merchant, the traveller, and the gentleman, must naturally recommend it as an important and desirable locality. It is, as nearly as possible by road, midway between the two extremities of England—Cornwall and Northumberland ; in the direct road between the two universities of Oxford and Cambridge ; and about equally distant, and in a straight line drawn from, all the following places :—from Brighton to Doncaster, south to north : from Harwich to Wor-

B

cester, east to west: from Bristol to Yarmouth, south-west and north-east: and from Dover to Liverpool, south-east and north-west:—thus standing like a star in the centre of them all; and surrounded, as with a zone, by the most important commercial and fashionable towns and cities in the kingdom. As a place of residence, its air is considered as very salubrious and healthful; and its water in general is naturally pure and wholesome. Provisions are good and moderate in price; its meat being considered as fine as any in the kingdom, and fruit and vegetables being usually abundant in supply. As a place of business, being so advantageously situated, as well as the capital of the county, it naturally commands a certain and regular trade; and all county business, meetings of societies, assizes, sessions, courts, assemblies, races, &c. being carried on in the town, it consequent<sup>ly</sup> produces a regular influx of visitors, who in a great measure tend to keep it continually gay, lively, and interesting. Lying also in the midst of a fine and open sporting country, the number of gentry of that class, who are in the habit of visiting it, is occasionally very considerable; which, added to its rich, important, and extensive public charities, renders it, for all classes of persons, one of the

most desirable places of abode that can probably be found. Not that as a town it has, as yet, attained to that marked superiority, either of general architecture, consequence, or enterprize, at which it is excellently calculated to arrive ; but possessing, as it does, the elements of all, in a population, industrious, intelligent, and wealthy ; and in a great, popular, and munificent benefaction, the application of the continually increasing funds of which must necessarily call forth the noblest energies of the mind ; the natural course of circumstances tend rapidly to raise it, so as ere long probably to vie with some of the proudest cities in the world.

Camden, in speaking of the town of Bedford, says, that it is "more eminent for the pleasantness of its situation, than for any thing of stateliness or beauty ;" a description which, however applicable it may have been to its appearance two hundred years ago, must be allowed, at present, to fall considerably short of what is due to its remarkably neat and regular appearance, or to the number and magnitude of its public buildings. But as this important change, of course, is the result of a more modern age, it ought not to prevent us from yielding full authority to

the positive parts of the observation of that great historian ; namely, its pleasantness and antiquity ; which, as they relate to circumstances that neither time could change, nor the hand of man could alter, even now retain an equal or superior force. With respect to the former, it must be observed that its situation is indeed remarkably pleasant and agreeable : being placed on the margin of a large navigable river; occupying either of its banks to a considerable extent ; and both sides being connected by a handsome modern bridge ; those circumstances alone communicate a very pleasing and picturesque effect to its appearance. To this also must be added that the river Ouse, winding with a course, as Fuller has observed, “ more mæandrous than Mæander,” through this portion of the county, in an extensive vale or plain, surrounded on all sides with ridges of hills that, taking a distant range, leave it all open to the south ; but on the north, rise directly over the town and shelter it from the cold and cutting winds in that direction ; it not only enjoys a warm and genial aspect, but being thus naturally drained and sheltered, the general salubrity of its air is thereby so much improved that many species of disease are much less frequent here than in many parts of the country ; and among others,

pulmonary affections in particular are rarely to be met with. It may also perhaps be not unworthy of remark, in a physical point of view, that the general course of the river being east and west, or in a direction with the prevailing winds, it thereby operates as a channel to draw off the more dense and unwholesome vapours ; and consequently purifies the air of the adjacent parts in a proportionate degree. Lastly, under this head, it may be observed, that the direction of the principal streets on both sides of the town, being directly to and from, or at right angles with the river, a regular current of air is thus continually kept up ; and the sun having more power in this direction than in any other, tends equally to enliven and exercise its influence in every quarter of its range : to which may here be added this ludicrous condolence of an old author, who, speaking of the serpentine windings of the Ouse, observes that it runs eighty miles in a distance of eighteen by land ; and then humourously exclaims, “blame it not, if, sensible of its sad condition, and presaging its fall into the foggy fens in the next county, it be loath to leave this pleasant place ; as who would not prolong their own happiness ! ”

## ANTIQUITY AND VARIOUS NAMES.

With respect to the antiquity of Bedford, its history, like that of most other places of an early and uncultivated period, appears to be involved in so much uncertainty as to be traceable only in those great military events and political convulsions which, like the sudden appearance of a comet to an ignorant and superstitious people, set a mark upon the period as an era of sufficient consequence to redeem it from the dark and gloomy monotony in which otherwise it had been lost. Thus in all unenlightend nations the epocha of their history have been determined only by their wars or conquests; while civilization, like the benign luminary of our pleasures and our existence, divides its eras into those periods of benefit and utility by which man is at once enlightened and ennobled; and which shed their lamps of brightness along the historic path of time, and open nature and science to his eyes and understanding. Accordingly, we shall take, at present, but a brief sketch of its ancient history, (attending particularly however to those points which have been obscured by conjecture, and which appear necessary to its identity in ancient

authors,) and reserve a more dilated form for those improvements in its modern state which may justly be regarded as its greatest glory. And while we heave a sigh in contemplating the oblivion that has fallen over the rich and magnificent endowments of its earlier periods, acknowledging however the perversion both of principle and practice that justly caused their ruin, it is fervently to be hoped that no future revolution either of power or of opinion may be able to overturn those beneficent institutions which the subsequent ages of the Reformation have raised upon far surer foundations than the former, namely, upon nature, reason, and religion ; and which, as long as Englishmen retain a sense of the blessings they enjoy, may be considered as unchangeable, except in the higher degrees of excellence of which they are susceptible.

Bedford, from its advantageous situation in the pass of a great river, seems early to have been distinguished as a point of contest or command ; and from this circumstance, its ancient history may be divided into four regular, distinct, and national eras :—the British, the Roman, the Saxon, and the Norman ; and with a remarkable exactness, it seems to represent an epitome, within itself, of the great

general history of the kingdom. Its ancient British name was LISWIDUR or LETTIDUR, signifying the passage or the lodging on the river; and it formed nearly the centre of the dominions of the tribe called by Dio, Cattuelani, and by Ptolemy, Cattieuchlani; whose prince Cassivellaunus was chosen generallissimo of the united forces of all the tribes to oppose the invasion of Julius Cæsar. In the time of Claudius it was reduced to the form of a province or settlement of the Romans, from whom it seems to have derived the name of LACTODORUM. Camden indeed gives two reasons for not assenting to the identity of Lactodorum and Bedford: first, "its not being situated upon a Roman way;" and secondly, "no Roman coins having been dug up here:" and as this investigation appears essential to establish an important era in its history, it will be necessary here to give them both a fair consideration.

In reply to the first, it may be observed, that as it is situated about midway between the two great Roman roads that enter the southern parts of the county, and exactly in a line between the acknowledged Roman settlements, Salenæ and Isannavenna (Sandy, in Bedfordshire, and Weedon, in Northamp-

tonshire) no site could be more probable for a Roman station; and when it is considered, that in the communication of these two settlements, the river Ouse must necessarily be passed near Bedford, and that it is utterly improbable the Romans would leave so great a bar to their communication unoccupied and unprotected, it may fairly be inferred that the places Lettidur and Lactodorum are the same. But, as if aware of the argument that might be brought forward, as more than a sufficient answer to both of his objections,—the evident analogy and identity of the names;—with an inconsistency utterly unworthy of so truly learned a man, he supposes the British name to have been subsequently formed out of the English,—*Bedford*; an opinion so totally at variance with the facts of history, which entirely loses sight even of the existence of the British here subsequently to its conquest by the Angles, as to show only the ingenious shifts with which a man can condescend to reason himself into the support of a favourite theory. But as the argument would probably never have been used, if not in conjunction with the *reasons* which that great historian gives for introducing it; it will probably be sufficient to observe, in addition to what has already been adduced

in support of the opinion,—first, that subsequent antiquaries have considered that evident traces of a Roman way may be discovered running from Potton to Bedford where it crosses the river and again runs on to Newport-Pagnel; and secondly the fact, which not only strengthens the opinion but entirely opposes the secondary objection, that many Roman coins and other remains *have been found* both at Bedford, and in various situations in its immediate neighbourhood. To all this it may be added that if any further argument should appear necessary to settle a difference with so gigantic an authority as Camden, and to show that Bedford is fairly entitled to the honour of a Roman name, it might easily be found in the present arms of the Corporation, which are—a Castle overshadowed with the spread imperial Roman Eagle.

Under the Saxons it received the name of **BEDICANFORD**, signifying the station or fortress on the ford, and was incorporated in the kingdom of Mercia, the last portion of the country that fell into their hands: from this name and from its derivative, **BEDANFORD**, as it has been just observed that the British name was supposed to be derived, it will here also be proper to make a comparison of the British

with those Anglo-Saxon terms ; and to show how far, or rather how little, they will bear a similarity of signification.

LETTUY has been translated *Beds*, or Inns : but as the idea of *Beds upon a ford* would evidently be most incongruous ; so it would, probably, be very difficult to show that the ancient British tongue had any word synonymous with public inns. Still less would such a derivation be applicable to the name of Bedford, which is clearly derived from the Saxon, implying a totally different signification : and though the words *Lettuy* (British) and *Bed* (English), are evidently forced to agree in some respects with Lettidur ; there is no writer, either of the Saxon or the English times, who can be supposed to have been a critic in the British tongue and yet so totally ignorant of the Saxon as not to know that *Bed* in the original designation, had no reference whatever either to Beds or Inns : So far therefore the opinion of its being of modern coinage\* appears to be ungrounded even on the slightest probable foundation ; and to be nothing less than one of those

\* Neither can it be supposed to be derived from the Latin, not only from the totally different genius of the two languages, but from the evidence that of two words in diffe-

sophisms which too frequently arise out of the conjectures on an historical difficulty.

About the Norman revolution we find the name of the town changed from **BEDAN-FORD**, into that of **BEDEFORD**; but whether it was not so changed long before that period does not positively appear, as this word seems to be as purely Saxon as the original from which it may be supposed to be derived. The Saxon word *Bede* signifies a prayer: it is therefore not improbable (as Florilegus informs us that a chapel stood formerly on the margin of the river, in which were deposited the remains of Offa the famous Mercian king, which was afterwards swept away by an extraordinary flood) that this name of Bedeford originated from the chapel; as it was not unfrequently the case, previous to the erec-

tion languages, completely different in their proper signification, yet evidently the one derived from the other; that would be the original which is the most applicable as a descriptive term: and to suppose the Roman name of *Lactodorum*, which in its etymology is evidently a derivative of *relation* or *possession*, would afford a derivative into a barbarous language, similar in sound, totally different in signification, yet exactly applicable as a descriptive name; would be, to say the least of it, to go beyond the bounds of analogy, probability, and probably of all example.

tion of bridges, for chapels to be erected in such places, in which persons might offer their prayers and oblations for the safe passage of the river.\* This practice also continued long afterwards; and we find, subsequent to the erection of Bedford Bridge, a chapel standing on it dedicated to St. Thomas the Apostle, which probably was used for an exactly similar purpose. This bridge appears to have been built in 1224, or the eighth year of King Henry the third, after the taking and demolition of Bedford castle by that monarch; and probably with the very stones of that extensive fortification. It does not appear whether the chapel alluded to was erected at the same time with the bridge, or whether the chapel on the ford was dilapidated previous to that time; but it seems likely that the one was made to be a substitute for the other, so as to render the previous name still an applicable one: as no change was made in it on that great and memorable occasion; nor subsequently on any other *occasion* whatever. The earliest record we have of the present orthography of the name, in which it is evidently not a *change* but an *abridgement* from that of \* Bedeford, is in the eighteenth year of King Edward the

\* Hence the name of Alms or *Bedehouses*, in which prayers were offered for the founders.

third or the year 1345 :\* in all previous similar official documents it is invariably written Bedford; thus giving the most positive proof that, for a period of at least three hundred years that was the established name; since in the third † and fifth † of the same reign it had on both occasions been similarly written. The present name of Bedford therefore, as it seems to rest entirely on the meaning of its previous one, and to be ascribed only to the change of language which took place about that time from its ancient Latinized to the present English form, may perhaps be not unaptly rendered *Chapel Bridge* or *Prayer Ford*, since *prayer* and the *place* of prayer seem often in Saxon to be synonymous; and in English, the word *Ford*,§ among the early writers, is frequently applied indiscriminately to the passage of a river either by boat or bridge.

### GOVERNMENT, PROPERTY, AND TITLES.

Bedford is a very ancient corporation; its first charter having been granted in the reign

\* Homines Bedfordiæ, Firma Burgi.      † Major et Ballivi Villæ Bedefordiæ, Firma Burgi.      ‡ Burgenses Villæ Bedefordiæ.      § From the Saxon verb *Faran* (to pass).

of King Henry the second, 1166. It was very early a representative borough; and was returned by writ in the fourth year of Edward the second, the only corporation in the county.

The body corporate is composed of a Mayor, Recorder, two Bailiffs, an uncertain number of Aldermen, and thirteen Common Council-men. It sends two representatives to Parliament, the right of electing whom lies with the freemen and householders not receiving alms. The precept is addressed to the Mayor and Bailiffs, who are the returning officers and holders of the manor.

After the Norman occupation, the castle or domain was bestowed by William on the family of Beauchamp, with the title of *Baron*. After falling to the King, it was given to the famous general and warrior, John, third son of King Henry the fourth; and raised to the rank of a *Dukedom*.

The town as well as the whole county, of Bedford, was formerly famous for the number and richness of its religious houses.\* Before the Reformation it contained seven churches,

\* Browne Willis, *Notitia*.

namely, St. Cuthbert's, St. Peter's (Martin), St. Paul's, Allsaints', St. Mary's, St. Peter's (Dunstable), and St. John's; besides the chapel of St. Thomas before mentioned, and the free chapel of St. Lloyd's: which alone will testify the former importance of the place: and when to these is added the number of its monastic institutions and endowments,—Newnham Priory, Elstow Abbey, Cauldwell Abbey, and the Convent of Grey Friars; and the two Hospitals of St. Leonard and St. John; it will probably be sufficient to show that there is much within the site of its vicinity that is calculated to excite the curiosity of the historian and the antiquary: and that, even at the present day, it is not without those remains of former grandeur which, setting aside the researches of science or curiosity, often operate as the strongest lessons of practical philosophy; and while the chief particulars of their history have vanished like the passing of a cloud, their record still remains to tell that they have been, and

“To point a moral, or adorn a tale.”

On the Dissolution, the chief part of this monastic property came into the hands of the Russell family by gift from the crown; and in

the reign of King Edward the sixth the title with the domain of the ancient castle, which had fallen into the King's hands for want of lineal descent, was bestowed on John Russell; thereby created *Earl of Bedford*. In 1694 it was restored to the rank of a *Dukedom* by King William the third, probably in consideration of the part taken by that family in the glorious stand for civil and religious liberty—the Revolution. It has ever since continued in the Russell family.

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#### PARISHES, DIVISIONS, AND EXTENT.

The present Town is composed of five united Parishes :—St. John's, St. Mary's, St. Paul's, St. Peter's, and St. Cuthbert's ; each having its own separate parochial jurisdiction, but incorporated together by act of Parliament, dated 1794, “for the better relief, regulation, and employment of the poor.” Of these five parishes, two (St. John's and St. Mary's,) are on the south side, and the other three on the north side of the river. St. Paul's is by far the most considerable, both in importance and extent ; lying immediately on the northern bank, and being thus situated better for:

commerce and navigation than any of the others : being also the most central of them all ; commanding the greatest portion of the High-Street ; and holding the most considerable fairs and markets entirely within its limits.

Next to this, in point of consequence, may be reckoned St. Mary's ; commanding that part of the High-Street on the south side of the river, and occupying the whole of that portion of its banks. It holds a weekly hog market, and an annual pleasure fair ; and by its quays and wharfs commands a fair portion of the commerce of the town by water.

St. Peter's is at the northern extremity of the town, and embraces the farthest portion of the High-Street in that direction : but in other respects is quite out of the way of business. It is a small but respectable parish ; stands on higher ground than either of the others ; and is particularly neat and rural in its appearance.

St. Cuthbert's is perhaps the least important parish in the town ; being quite removed from the great thoroughfares of the High-Street : but it is evidently of the highest an-

tiquity of them all ; and, no doubt, formerly embraced not only the ancient fortress or castle, but the whole of the most important portion of the town, and the first church erected in it. Its principle street is still in a direct line with the ancient ford ; over which rises, with an appearance that even now seems to mark its formidable command, the lofty keep of the ancient Bedford castle. This street was probably the chief street of the town previous to the erection of St. Paul's Church and the building of the bridge : but the whole parish is now almost sunk into insignificance ; though it possesses advantages in point of situation sufficient to redeem it : commanding the northern bank of the river below that of St. Paul's ; and rising sufficiently northward, to be beyond the reach of inundation.

St. John's is at the farthest southern extremity of the town. It is a small and but inferior parish ; and is completely isolated within that of St. Mary, from which it doubtless originated in consequence of the foundation of its ancient monastic Hospital. It stands well as an entrance to the town : embracing a considerable portion of the main street in that direction, and commanding the cross

road to Woburn and Oxford. It is however, like that of St. Mary which it joins, liable to inundation from an overflow of the river; and, though probably the least ancient parish of the five, has nothing in its appearance to identify it with that which may be called its modern part.

The extent of Bedford, from its southern to its utmost northen extremity, is about a mile; and its average width, (which is greatest in the middle,) considerably upwards of a third; thus occupying a space which may be estimated, including the channel of the river, at nearly 250 square acres; almost all the subdividing sections of which are closely occupied with buildings; and consequently leaving but a comparatively small portion of ground that may be considered as unoccupied for the purposes of habitation. Its general form is therefore that of a complicated cross, having one principal street or thoroughfare running, in a nearly straight direction through the middle of the town, from the beginning almost to the end; with other and smaller streets, both on the right and left, running in a generally parallel direction with it; the whole of which are so intersected by the different subdivisions crossing them east and west, gen-

erally at equal angles, as to divide the town into a number of squares or quadrangular portions ; giving it thereby a simple and regular appearance, remarkably adapted to the execution of those modern improvements which are equally founded on utility and taste.

Its principal public buildings and institutions may be arranged according to the following list.

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## PLACES OF PUBLIC RELIGIOUS WORSHIP

### National Establishment.

- ST. PAUL'S CHURCH.
- ST. PETER'S CHURCH.
- ST. CUTHBERT'S CHURCH.
- ST. MARY'S CHURCH.
- ST. JOHN'S CHURCH.

### Dissenters' Chapels, &c.

- THE OLD MEETING HOUSE.
- THE NEW MEETING HOUSE.
- THE BAPTIST MEETING HOUSE.
- THE MORAVIAN CHAPEL.
- THE METHODIST CHAPEL.

## PUBLIC SCHOOLS, AND ENDOWMENTS.

THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

THE ENGLISH AND MATHEMATICAL SCHOOL.

THE PREPARATORY SCHOOL.

THE HOSPITAL.

THE HARPUR-STREET ALMS HOUSES.

THE NEW ALMS HOUSES.

THE OLD ALMS HOUSES.

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## GENERAL EDIFICES.

THE COUNTY HALL.

THE COUNTY INFIRMARY.

THE COUNTY ASYLUM.

THE COUNTY JAIL.

THE COUNTY PENITENTIARY.

THE HOUSE OF INDUSTRY.

BEDFORD BRIDGE.

THE SWAN INN.

These buildings are so distributed about, in different directions of the town, as to add considerably to its interest and ornament beyond what they could have done had their various sites been more nearly together than they are. The walk which is thus necessary to inspect them being considerable, visitors

are consequently drawn to those quarters of the town which, being more or less removed from the eye of observation, would be apt to fall into neglect, and to become rather an offence and a discredit: a circumstance which, to the honour of the town commissioners, is rarely to be found in Bedford.

The last mentioned building, which stands immediately at the entrance of the bridge from the farther side, might almost seem to apply to the translation of "Beds on the Ford," which Camden (it has been shown how erroneously,) and subsequent writers on his authority, have given of the name of Bedford; but if any thing in the present appearance of the town could be admissible as an argument of the applicability of a name given it eight hundred years ago, it would perhaps be no contemptible proof, if we were to adduce the former portion of the list (the number of its churches and chapels) to show, that at least in the appearance, Bedford, in the nineteenth century, is not behind the former zeal which peculiarly designated it with the name of "Prayer." The middle portion of the list, as an admirable set off to the first, will also serve to show that, both in the name and in the practice of that divine profession whose

essential principle is *charity*, it is not only equal to its former fame, but very far beyond it.

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## RUINS AND ANTIQUATED REMAINS.

NEWNHAM (ABBEY) RUINS.

FRIARS (PRIORY) FARM.

CAULDWELL (ABBEY) FARM.

ELSTOW (ABBEY) RUINS.

BOWLING GREEN (BEDFORD CASTLE KEEP.)

These places of course being greatly changed in their appearance from what they formerly presented, some of them being even now used for the purpose of habitation, must necessarily have undergone alterations which in some measure tend to despoil them even of the remains of ancient beauty. Those however against which no hands but those of time and destruction have been raised, are by far the most interesting ; still retaining some vestiges of what they have been, and forming a pleasing addition to the general attractions of the place, well worthy of the notice of the visitor.

## TOPOGRAPHY AND DESCRIPTION.

The entrance into Bedford by the London road, though in some respects pleasing, is not altogether such as to give an adequate idea of the town, as to its regularity, respectability, or neatness; consisting, for a considerable distance, of a part of the old town which has been very little improved, occasioned probably by its distance from the markets and general points of public business, as well as from its liability to flood in very rainy seasons: that side of the river lying considerably lower than the northern bank which has a gentle acclivity all the way to its extreme end; while the southern side runs flat to nearly the whole extent. It is now however gradually assuming a better appearance: and doubtless, in a few years, will hold a proportionate rank with the other public parts of the town; the roads and walks being beautifully kept, and having those two great county beneficial institutions in its immediate neighbourhood,—the Infirmary and Asylum, which command the traveller's notice at a considerable distance in approaching the town; and having a fine open aspect

and an airy rural appearance which render the situation particularly pleasant.

On approaching the town, on the left, near the high road, stands ST. LEONARD'S FARM, formerly a monastic Hospital of the same name. This hospital appears to have been founded about the twelfth or early in the thirteenth century. It is said to have been endowed by the "Towns-men" of Bedford for six poor monks or friars, who probably were to pray generally for the town. Its endowment consisted of a considerable tract of land in the county, with other valuable emoluments; the patronage of which, in the reign of King Henry the seventh, was given by the town to Sir Reginald Bray for his assistance to the petition of the corporation for the reduction of their fee-farm. It was confiscated in the reign of King Henry the eighth, and now belongs to His Grace the Duke of Bedford.

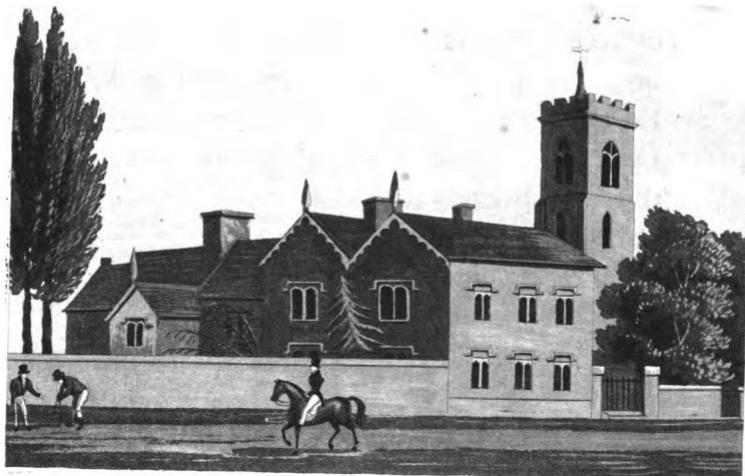
Advancing into the town, not far in on the right stands the

CHURCH, AND HOSPITAL OF ST. JOHN,  
also an ancient monastic institution said to have been founded by one Robert De Parys

in the tenth century ; and endowed for a master, and two co-brethren, or priests, who were to pray for the soul of the founder. The earliest date of this institution is given 980 ; but that of the register of Lincoln being evidently either a mistake or interpolation, (A. D. Millo Nono Centesimo LXXX.) a great deal of difference has arisen relative to its real date. It is most probable that the different dates refer to separate endowments ; and that about the year 1280, which Lysons gives for its origin, it was considerably *enlarged* for the reception and support of the poor freemen of Bedford by the munificence of one of the St. John family ; and that previous to that period it was merely a Bede-house or oratory : the conditions of its enlargement being that the inmates were to pray for the soul of this benefactor, John St. John, his family and descendants. From this provision for the poor freemen of the town, it would appear that from this period the hospital was under the protection of the corporation, as the church and hospital had been united long before the Reformation ; about which time an attempt was made to deprive it of its ancient character, and to seize the church as parochial into the King's hands. On this occasion, according to a M S. in the

British Museum, it sets forth its title and claim to be exempted from confiscation; showing that for 400 years it had been an hospital, and the church used as the hospital church; that it had a common seal of which no other public church was possessed; and that many of its donations and legacies had been made prior to Edward the first. This date establishes its existence previous to the endowment of the St. Johns; it is therefore probable that the date of 980 is the correct one. An ancient manuscript is also mentioned prescribing the "co-frieres" to be of the order of St. Augustine; and the alms-men to wear red crosses.

The church has within a few years been considerably improved in its appearance; and since the decease of the late incumbent, whose residence at a distance and advanced age prevented him from attending to those matters, having come into the possession of the Rev. Dr. Hunt, the whole range of buildings, (which are of considerable extent, containing the parsonage house, the chapel, the hospital, &c.) has been so completely restored and beautified, as to present not only a very pleasing but an elegant appearance; and to add very considerably to the ornament of this



*St. John's Church and Hospital.*



A. Howell Junr. Sc.

J. H. M. D. d.

*St. Cuthbert's Church.*



quarter of the town. The church is a small building having only one aisle with pews on each side, about the middle of which stands on one side the pulpit, and on the other the desk : it has a small open chancel at the east end, and a tower of fair dimensions for the size of the building, at the west, containing one bell for which it is chiefly indebted to the kindness of the Duke of Bedford who presented the parish with a handsome contribution towards the purchase of it in 1826, when the old one had become cracked in consequence of its violent demonstrations at the time of the election. The whole building, including the chancel, is 117 feet long, and the tower 67 feet high : the windows are all on the south side, excepting that of the chancel : they are plain, but light in their appearance, and the latter large and handsome for the size of the building. The upper sweeps of the arches are ornamented externally with a projecting moulding, finished on each side with the faces of some strange creatures, not all alike, boldly carved in stone. The interior, though small is neat, and has a gallery over the entrance, and several flat and mural monuments at the east end to the memory of former Rectors and Masters, with some handsome coats of arms. The top of the church is furnished with battlements as

well as the tower. The churchyard is small and has lately been thrown open to the south side of the parsonage house, with an open iron fence; giving it at once a more roomy and more agreeable appearance. The ancient hall or chapel of the hospital was large and lofty; but this has lately been altered for the convenience of a residence, so that the effect is entirely lost. The windows, and the whole air of the buildings are of the gothic cast, the roofs being ornamented below with little pendant arches and at each angle of the vertex with a little spire, the number of which being considerable, from the extent and variety of the façade, gives it actually the appearance of a little modern convent.—The rectory is furnished with a very pretty garden of considerable extent. The late respected incumbent was the Rev. J. Parker, M. A.

The endowment of the St. Johns is still kept up by the allowance of nine-pence a week to ten poor freemen of the town. Its funds are very considerable, arising from landed property in the neighbourhood of the town, and other places; and render the living one of the most important of the town. It is in the gift of the corporation. The Master, who is also the Rector, and the brethren are incorporated

by the use of a common seal having this inscription round it with a figure of St. John the Baptist in the middle, holding an extended band bearing the same words: "Sigillum Hospitalis Sancti Iohannis Baptista de Bedford." The seal is well engraved, and in its whole appearance bears evident marks of a more modern date than the last foundation that has been mentioned. Divine service is performed here once every Sunday, morning or afternoon, alternately with St. Peter's.

About equally distant from St. John's church and the bridge stands, on the same side as the former,

#### THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY,

in the parish of the same name. This is a remarkably neat looking edifice, having a battlemented top with a tower in the centre which is curiously ornamented with inlaid archwork having a very pleasing effect. The windows are very light and elegant, having but little open stone work, the angles at the vertex being particularly pointed. The chief entrance from St. Mary's street has an iron palisade in front: having a neat arched doorway opening into the two aisles by which the interior is divided. The church though small has

a roomy chancel in its eastern extremity, and a gallery and organ at the west. The tower stands between the nave and chancel supported on arches: it contains six bells, and a chime clock. The top is embattled, having four handsome pinnacles, below which a dragons head projects at each corner of the moulding. The interior of the church is remarkably neat; consisting of a nave and north aisle, separated by four piered arches on clustered pillars. The chancel contains several monuments: particularly one of Dr. Giles Thorn, Rector of St. Mary's and St. Peter's, Archdeacon of Buckingham, and Chaplain to King Charles the second, emblazoned with his arms, and supported by a group of female figures. Also of the Rev. William Done, Archdeacon of Bedford, and Prebend of Lincoln. In the north aisle is a monument of John Beaumont, a physician who died in 1698, with a long inscription setting forth the benevolence of his character. The floor of the nave contains a brass effigy of Robert Hawse, Alderman, and thrice mayor of the town, dressed in his robes, dated 1627. Also a neat mural tablet to the memory of the Rev. W. Cumming, the late respected simple-hearted and worthy Rector, ought not to be omitted. The register contains

several notices of a curious nature, particularly of Dame Ann Preston, Dame Elizabeth Fox, and Dame Elizabeth Napier, three nuns of Elstow abbey, who survived the Dissolution and were here interred. This church seems formerly to have belonged to the Priory of Dunstable. The living is now in the gift of the Bishop of Lincoln: the Rev. T. Bowens being the present Rector. The churchyard is small and lies at the back and sides of the church and contains nothing very remarkable. The service is performed twice every Sunday.

At St. Mary's church, the High-Street is intersected at equal angles, by Potter-Street on the right, and Cauldwell-Street on the left. The former leading to Cardington, and running parallel with the river does not command an extensive neighbourhood. It contains however several handsome modern residences, as well as some of a more ancient date; among which, that of C. F. Palmer, Esq. M. P. for the town of Reading, is remarkable both for its lightness, and singular style. On the opposite side of the High-Street runs Cauldwell-Street, also parallel with the river, leading to Kempston: this also is one of the old parts of the town, but has within a few years been considerably improved, and no

doubt will, ere long, entirely give way to modern improvements. The most conspicuous feature of this quarter is a beautiful mansion or villa in the cottage style highly ornamented with open veranda and trellis work, admirably set with roses, jessamines, and climbers of various species; the façade is stucco, and the open work of a bright green which, being contrasted with the various tints of the flowering shrubs luxuriantly climbing and entwining round, give it a most charming and elegant appearance. It has also attached to it, a beautiful conservatory in the Grecian style, embellished with borders of stained glass which communicate a remarkable glow of richness to the whole. It stands back several yards from the street, having an open iron railing, the intermediate area being planted with beautiful shrubs: and as a whole, forms a picture of rural elegance equally creditable to the designer and ornamental to the town. In this street also are several handsome modern houses, less showy indeed, but probably more durable: among which is the parsonage house belonging to the church of St. Mary. It was built within a few years by the late incumbent, and was scarcely inhabited by him and Mrs. Cumming before his death put a period to their enjoyment of it.

Proceeding onward through the High-Street; from St. Mary's church the more visible improvements of the town commence with an excellent modern pavement which, for beauty, might certainly vie with any town in the kingdom. The road, which was formerly pitched, has lately been Macadamized, as it is termed, and runs with a straight and even course towards the bridge between regular rows of respectable and many handsome houses; most of which are inhabited by private individuals; as, for the causes before assigned, this part has not as yet been thickly furnished with shops.

#### THE BRIDGE

itself is a massive and handsome building erected in 1813, on nearly the same site as the former bridge. It runs almost directly north and south; the line passing only within a degree or two of the polar star. It stands on five slightly elliptical arches, and is 306 feet long and 30 broad. The body of the work is faced with a pale brown stone, and the arches are both faced and lined with white Portland: giving it thereby a very beautiful relief. The upper part has a lofty parapet, supported with an open balustrade or pilasters of the same material. On the left centre is engraved the

following inscription ; at once a brief and comprehensive historical memento :

THE ORIGINAL BRIDGE OVER THE RIVER OUSE, AT THIS PLACE, WAS OF REMOTE ANTIQUITY; ITS DATE IS NOT KNOWN, BUT THERE WAS CERTAINLY A BRIDGE OF STONE BEFORE THE ONE BUILT IN THE EARLY PART OF THE 13<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY; OF ITS EXISTENCE AND DIMENSIONS MANY INDISPUTABLE TRACES HAVE BEEN FOUND. UPON THE DEMOLITION OF THE CASTLE OF BEDFORD, IN THE YEAR 1224, A LARGER BRIDGE WAS FOUNDED OF THE MATERIALS; WHICH HAVING FALLEN INTO DECAY, WAS, AFTER A LAPSE OF NEARLY SIX HUNDRED YEARS, TAKEN DOWN AND REPLACED BY THE PRESENT STRUCTURE,

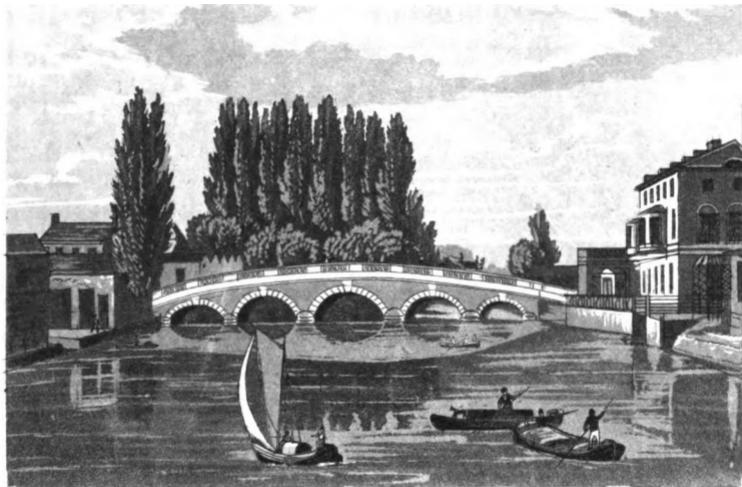
DESIGNED & EXECUTED BY JOHN WING, OF BEDFORD, UNDER THE DIRECTION OF COMMISSIONERS, AUTHORIZED BY TWO ACTS OF PARLIAMENT, OF THE 43<sup>RD</sup> AND 50<sup>TH</sup> OF G. III. THE FIRST STONE WAS LAID BY FRANCIS, MARQUIS OF TAVISTOCK, ON THE SOLID ROCK, BELOW THE PILES ON WHICH THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE ANCIENT BRIDGES WERE PLACED, ON THE 26<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF APRIL, 1811.

GRANT DAVID YEATS, M.D. MAYOR OF BEDFORD. IT WAS COMPLETED, AND OPENED FOR PUBLIC USE ON THE 1<sup>ST</sup> DAY OF NOVEMBER, 1813, IN THE MAYORALTY OF WILLIAM LONG ESQ. IN THE 54<sup>TH</sup> YEAR OF THE REIGN OF KING GEORGE III.

At the northern extremity of the bridge, or that nearest the centre of the town, stands a toll house and gate, erected at the same



*St. Mary's Church.*



R. Howell Junr. Sc.

J. H. M. Del.

*Paddington Bridge.*



time as the bridge itself, for the purpose of paying off the great expense incurred in its erection, which amounted to upwards of fifteen thousand pounds. This has been considered by many as a great grievance on account of its shutting out the free intercourse of one part of the town with the other, either by horse, or carriage : and the Duke of Bedford, and the late S. Whitbread Esq. gave liberal donations towards removing the liability of the inhabitants to toll : but as the foot communication is free and unrestrained, as well as that by hand-barrow, or draught, the grievance does not seem altogether so considerable as at first it might appear. The debt however on the bridge it is expected will be cleared in a few years ; after which the toll house and gate will be immediately removed.

Immediately passing the toll gate, on the right hand side, on the northern bank of the river, stands

THE SWAN INN,

erected by the late Francis, Duke of Bedford, with part of the materials of the once celebrated Houghton House, a beautiful seat which formerly stood in the park of the same name, near Ampthill, purchased by him of the late

Earl of Upper Ossory ; and which, being situated so near to his seat of Woburn Abbey, was removed for this purpose : the estate lying so nearly contiguous to his former domains as to be supposed not to need another mansion to keep it up. This house, with the ground attached to it, occupies the site of the castle, so celebrated for the figure it makes in the history of the civil wars. The building is plain but chaste and beautiful, consisting of four stories regularly arranged ; the front and side toward the river being faced with wrought stone. The entrance at the west has a Grecian portico ; and on each side of the building is a square gateway surmounted by a balustrade. The great room on the side next the river (usually occupied for assemblies and public meetings) has two handsome circular projecting windows overlooking the river ; which add greatly to the beauty of its external appearance, and equally so to its pleasantness internally. The gardens by the river side are pleasingly arranged ; and for command and beauty of situation, there are perhaps but few such places to be met with. The bowling green, which will be noticed in subsequent order, is situated at the bottom of the garden, or its farthest eastern extremity : independently of its airy situation and exten-

sive view; it forms a fine variety to the general outline of the grounds; and adds equally to the beauty and interest of the spot.

A little beyond the Swan, and on the opposite side of the High-Street, St. Paul's Square branches off to the left hand, having the County Hall on the south, the public Grammar School on the west fronting the High-Street, and several handsome residences with shops, &c. on the other sides: the whole embracing a regular quadrangular of more than 10,000 square yards, with the large and beautiful cathedral Church of St. Paul in the centre of the area, surrounded on three sides by a breast wall surmounted by an open iron rail work, and on the east side the churchyard approaching the backs of the houses in the High-Street. At this point begin the life and bustle of the town which, especially on market-days, render Bedford one of the most crowded little capitals that can easily be imagined. From this part to the head of the High-Street, for a quarter of a mile, the town on each side of the way is nearly one continued succession of shops, arranged in a neat and regular manner; and many of them vieing in taste and show even with those of the metropolis itself. Advancing farther up, we ar-

rive at the market house and shambles on the left hand side : a plain and commodious erection, more indeed for use than show, containing three sections of shops, or covered stalls ; two running parallel with each other on each side the gate, being joined at the end at right angles by the third which is the butter and poultry market ; being well adapted by its cool and airy construction for the purpose intended. In front of the market house, on a quadrangular area called the market hill, is the fruit and vegetable market which however, particularly in busy seasons, generally extends by the side of the foot way for half the distance through the town. The market house, hill, &c. are completely embraced by the northern side of St. Paul's Square, which here again communicates with the High-Street : this is sometimes called the *new* market place to distinguish it from the *old* which stands considerably higher up the town ; and where still a very large number of temporary shops, stalls, shambles, &c. on market days, attest the disposition of the more humble dealers to carry on a business, if not as lucrative, at least as noisy and as bustling as their more respectable and permanent rivals.

Here, on an open square, stands the town jail or cage; a strong-built and remarkably prison-looking place, for the reception of those unhappy speculators on the peace or property of others who being either unable or unwilling to procure a better lodging, are here accommodated free of expense until brought to give an account of themselves before the competent authorities of the town.

At this part of the High-Street, intersecting it right and left, occur Mill-Street, or (according to its old designation) Mill-Lane and Silver-Street. In the former are situated three chapels or meeting-houses of Dissenters; namely, one Baptist, one Independent, and one of a Mixed Communion: the latter celebrated under the name of Bunyan's or

THE OLD MEETING;

being that in which the celebrated individual of that name officiated during many years as the stated minister. It is an old and rather mean-looking building, plainly built of brick; having a triple-ridged roof abutting towards the street, with a small porched entrance at the front, and a vestry at the back, the latter of which communicates, by Castle-Lane, with the lower parts of the town. It stands back

several yards, and is surrounded on three sides by a burial ground which is numerously set with monumental stones and separated from the street by an iron palisading. The front and east side of the building are adorned with various marble memorials ; particularly one containing a list of the several pastors since its first establishment in the year 1650. namely :—John Gifford, died 1656. Benjamin Burton, 1660. Benjamin Whiteman, 1671. Samuel Fenn, (1681,) co-pastor with John Bunyan, who died, 1688. Ebenezer Chandler, 1747. Samuel Sanderson, 1766. and Joshua Symonds, 1788.—down to the present respected minister, his immediate successor, who has officiated now upwards of 40 years and enjoys the confidence and attachment of his congregation in a high degree. The east side contains another monument to the memory of the last-mentioned minister recorded on the tablet, with others of his wife and family. In the burial ground is a stone to the memory of Hannah Bunyan, great-grand-daughter of John Bunyan ; stating that he was minister here thirty-two years and, during that period, suffered twelve years imprisonment.

Its interior is not in any respect better than its external appearance ; being densely

furnished with pews, facing the pulpit and in right lines with the entrance, which has a bad effect: and having on three sides an extensive gallery; but so near the ceiling, on account of the lowness of the roof, as to be very unpleasing to the eye, and doubtless, very injurious to the health of the congregation. On the eastern side, unoccupied by the gallery, stands the pulpit placed between two windows of good form and considerable dimensions, which would have a good effect if the other parts of the interior were proportionately in keeping. It contains two handsome chandeliers the gift of the late Samuel Whitbread, Esq. M. P. to the congregation, of which the warm and truly christian-hearted Howard (surnamed the Philanthropist) was formerly a member. In the vestry, which is situated at the back, are shown several curious remnants of its early history; particularly Bunyan's chair. It is of a plain form, of simple and ordinary materials, and remarkable for nothing but the extreme lowness of the seat, which circumstance might perhaps serve to elucidate something beyond the physical character of its owner. The congregation is numerous, and respectable; and in general fills the place. The present minister is the Rev. Samuel Hillyard. The

chapel has a residence for its minister which has been lately erected, situated in Harpur-Street. It is also provided with many considerable charities which will subsequently be noticed. It contains nearly 120 pews, and is capable of seating 800 persons.

#### THE NEW MEETING

is a plain and unassuming structure, not far from the former, (to which it owes its origin) also of brick, and apparently well-built. It is of a simple quadrangular form ; the four sides of the roof verging to a point, and having the apex mounted with a ball. It stands back at some distance from the street ; having a small burial ground in front, with an open iron gateway. Its interior is remarkably neat and regular : consisting of four sections of pews, separated by a central and two side aisles ; and having a gallery to three of its sides, and the pulpit on the fourth, facing the front entrance, which opens by an inner inclosed doorway right and left. The chapel was erected in 1771, and owes its origin to a change of sentiment which took place in the minister of the old meeting at that time (the Rev. Joshua Symonds) with respect to the ceremony of baptism : he having been pre-

viously a paedobaptist. This change produced a separation of the congregation, the disapproving part of whom immediately proceeded to erect a separate place of worship, in which they were chiefly assisted by the benevolent Mr. Howard, who generously opened his purse to them on the occasion: and though probably his own liberal mind would have found insufficient grounds for a separation himself, yet perceiving an offence existed which was likely to scatter them from the connection, became at once the patron and leader of the new establishment, which appears still to bear a very friendly relation towards the mother congregation. The members of the New Meeting, though respectable, are not near so numerous as those of the former. The present minister is the Rev. C. R. Muston.

#### THE BAPTIST MEETING

is situated in a court but a few yards from the former. It is entirely removed from the public eye, and has nothing in its external appearance requiring particular notice. It is a small place of worship, and has a plain, regular, and decent congregation. Like that of the former, it has derived its origin from the

Old Meeting, as well from the same cause : the difference of sentiment in them all being, that the members of the present hold only with adult baptism ; those of the New Meeting retain the original principles on which the first congregation separated, namely infant baptism ; while those of the Old Meeting are composed of both, who, notwithstanding, find nothing in the union inconsistent with christian fellowship and social harmony. May such liberality increase.

At the head of Mill-Lane, and in the centre of four ways forming a cross, answering nearly to the four cardinal points of the compass, is situated the Church of St. Cuthbert. The road beyond the church takes the name of Castle Street and runs a considerable distance ; ending in a pleasant walk across the fields, leading to the neighbouring village of Goldington. That on the left is known by the general name of St. Cuthbert's ; and that on the right, exactly opposite to it, runs straight to the river ; ending at the Old Ford below the castle, and still retaining its ancient name.

#### ST. CUTHBERT'S CHURCH

thus standing in so commanding a situation, and seeming to give its neighbourhood an in-

dividual importance of its own, is however a small, low, and mean-looking structure ; having nothing in its appearance of the Norman architecture and very little of what is usually termed the Gothic. Its proportions are very unpleasing to the eye : being very narrow in comparison with its length ; having an unusually deep roof, and being irregularly furnished with low buttresses remarkably wide. It has a small bell suspended from a latticed box placed on the roof, evidently of modern erection ; and is surrounded by a wall embracing the churchyard which is as antique as the church itself. Its interior consists of but one aisle and chancel, having a small gallery at the west : and is of a very plain and rustic description. The church (whether the same building or not it is impossible to say) was founded by King Offa, as an atonement for numerous violations of which he had been guilty ; particularly of treacherously murdering the King of the East Angles and seizing on his possessions in 772 : it is doubtless therefore of greater antiquity than any other church in Bedford, and is intimately connected with the history of the town, and of the middle ages of the Saxon Heptarchy. The site of the whole neighbourhood is particularly interesting to the antiquary ; being completely overlooked by that

of the ancient castle, one corner of the outer ballia of which may still be distinctly traced filling up the south-western angle of what may be termed St. Cuthbert's cross, or the four roads that have been mentioned; and forming a close approximation to the church itself. St. Cuthbert's\* is a rectory in the gift of the King: the present incumbent is the Rev. Henry Tattam.

On the opposite side of the High-Street, in a straight direction from Mill-Lane, proceed Silver-Street and Well-Street; intersected at right angles by White-Horse-Street, and Angel Street. This part of the town remains chiefly in its old state; the improve-

\* St. Cuthbert, one of the earliest and most illustrious of the Saxon saints, was regarded as their tutelar defender against the northern invaders. His shrine at Durham was exceedingly rich, and endowed with possessions and privileges to an uncommon degree of extent. Most of the Saxon Kings contributed to it; and he is reported to have appeared to King Alfred previous to his conquering the Danes, and promised him the victory. Alfred, Guthrum the Dane, and William the Conqueror visited his shrine: the latter (probably from policy) doing him great honour, and confirming all its former privileges. His life is written by Venerable Bede who was nearly contemporary with him: so that it is probable most of the legends not contained in that work were subsequent inventions of his seculars and devotees.

ments contemplated in the town-improvement act not having, as yet, extended to this ; which being situated rather low, particularly Well-Street, and subject to flood in very rainy seasons, has, in some respects, checked that spirit of enterprise which has lately been exceedingly visible in some parts of the town ; and of which this part, from its vicinity to the High-Street, appears peculiarly susceptible. It is thickly inhabited, chiefly by the operative classes of the community, who here, confined in close courts and low houses, and toiling at their lacepillows and other sedentary employments from morning till night, inhale an atmosphere unchanged by the salutary breezes of the streets ; and entail sickness and disease on themselves, and too often on whole families together. The natural progress of circumstances, however, it is hoped will shortly abolish in Bedford the pestiferous practice of packing crowds together in obscure and unventilated corners which are never visited by the pure breath of Heaven or the beneficial eye of investigation : a custom which is equally injurious to the health and morals of the people.

Here however it is to be observed that the benefits of the Harpur-Charity, under the

operation of the last act of Parliament for its regulation, it is expected will shortly shine pre-eminent; as the whole of one side of Angel-Street, with a considerable part of Well-Street is appointed to come down; and a set of handsome public buildings as schools for the free education of the different classes of youth, houses for the residence of the masters, &c. to be erected on the site: where, instead of the present old-fashioned, irregular, and mean-looking buildings, a superb ornament will be added to the town, completely opening a large and central area to the encouraging influence of a healthy circulation; affording at once a pleasing union of benefit and beauty; and communicating a benignant influence both to the physical and moral atmosphere which, by providing an efficient education for every class of the community, will place it in the power of the humblest individual to avail himself of those circumstances which, by the practice of sobriety and industry, may raise him to the highest degree of respectability and happiness.

At the head of the High-Street another intersection takes place on each side of the way, parallel to Silver-Street and Mill-Lane, by Harpur-Street on the left and St. Peter's

on the right ; while the main road diverges obliquely, or rather circularly, to the left, leading to a quarter that has been newly built on and styled the New-Town.

Before we enter that, however, it will be necessary to notice Harpur-Street ; a fine open, airy situation, consisting, on the north side, of a long and uniform row of convenient brick-built houses, erected by the Trustees of the Harpur-Charity for the benefit of decayed housekeepers, who here reside, free of expense, and receive a weekly stipend, with other advantages, to support them in their old age. These, which are previously mentioned under the name of

#### THE HARPUR-STREET ALMS HOUSES,

consist of forty-six in number, and in familiar language are known by the appellation of the Six-and-forties : consisting of four rooms each, two below and two above stairs ; and have each a garden behind of about forty feet in length ; thereby furnishing their inmates with the means of a pleasing amusement or a silent retreat. The allowance consists of 7s. a week for a single man or woman ; with £2 annually for clothing : or 10s. 6d. for a man and his wife ; with an additional pound for

the clothing of the wife. The inmates are required (if not incapable) to attend regularly some place of religious worship.

The south side of this street consists chiefly of extensive garden walls, but has several houses at the upper part, particularly that erected for the minister of the Old Meeting, which has been already mentioned : a snug, substantial, and very neat-looking residence with a garden and palisades in front. This side is bisected by a short but handsome modern street named Harpur-Place. The houses are here all built in an uniform manner, and occupied by highly respectable individuals ; being built on lease from the Trustees of the Harpur-Charity, in the conditions of which it is expressly stipulated that no shops are to be allowed in it. The street itself is wide, open, and nicely paved, and gives to this part a very superior appearance. It runs in a southerly direction parallel with the western side of the High-Street in a direct communication with St. Paul's Square.

At the bottom of Harpur-Street the road takes a wide and open expansion, communicating obliquely, by a branch called St. Lloyd's, with the bottom of Harpur-Place. At the angle

formed by the junction of St. Lloyd's and Harpur-Street, and right facing the entrance to the town in that direction, stand two respectable and prettily designed houses, uniformly built and erected within the last few years ; having an extensive semi-circular sweep of garden in front, inclosed with open trellis work which, being planted with evergreens and flowering shrubs, gives to this part of the town a very pleasing and rural appearance. These houses occupy the front of a considerable triangle of which the left side is formed by the Old Alms Houses, and the right by the County Jail.

#### THE OLD ALMS HOUSES

consist of eight brick cottages erected by Thomas Christie Esq. for the accommodation of as many poor and aged widows. The endowment is but trifling, and consists of one shilling weekly to each inmate ; to which the Trustees of the Harpur-Charity beneficently add another three : thus making it at least a considerable benefit to those who have no other means of livelihood but that at which every sensitive mind must naturally shrink (the parish). The funds are paid out of the great tithes ; and the appointment lies with the minister of St. Paul's, to whom these tithes were bequeathed by the founder for this

purpose ; and also to give 52s. a year in bread to the poor of each of the parishes of St. Paul and St. Mary, and to keep St. Paul's chancel and these Alms Houses in proper repair. The front wall has a stone with the following inscription "Deo & Pauperibus 1687."

#### THE COUNTY JAIL

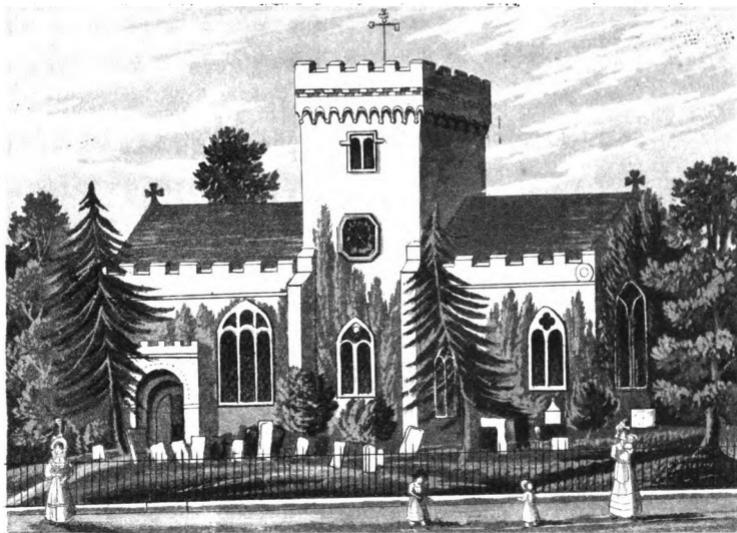
stands just opposite them, on the other side of the triangle ; surrounded by lofty and extensive walls of stone which give it a dull and gloomy appearance. It is entered in front by a handsome flight of stone steps which lead, by a sort of outer turnkey's ward or court, to the interior of the building. Immediately over the entrance is a high square turret of stone containing the turnkey's chambers, and on the top having a flat roof, surrounded with iron palings, on which is erected the Drop for the execution of criminals, whenever those wretched and disgusting exhibitions are appointed to take place ; which unhappily has, within a few years past, been but too frequently the case, owing, perhaps more than to all other causes put together, to the progress and operation of the game laws : as many of those unfortunate beings, whose crimes have not come under that de-

nomination, have ascribed their primary demoralization to that fascinating temptation which places an easy means of satisfying nature within the reach of those who are perishing for want of it, yet adds "touch not on peril of your existence."\* Over the gateway are suspended fetters; designative less perhaps of the place than of the principle which, while it provides every thing for the bodily comforts of its inmates that humanity, joined with propriety, can suggest, thus allows bonds to be cast upon the mind which too often reduce it, for ever after, to the lowest state of moral slavery. The building was erected in 1801, and is considered one of the

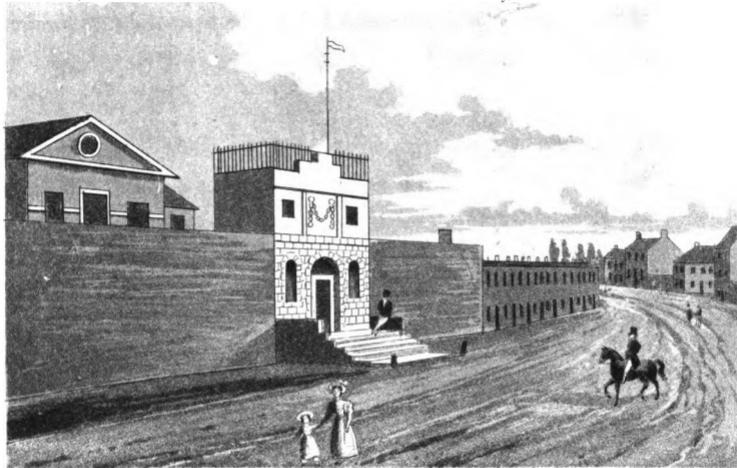
\* For the sake of humanity, and for the sake of society at large, it is hoped that some means will be devised to prevent the inducement to those offences; which in this neighbourhood, for a considerable time past, have been miserably prevalent; and which, in spite of the severest penalties of the law, continue to send in their multitudes of victims; consisting chiefly of the most efficient and enterprising of our agricultural labourers who are absolutely destitute of employment or bound down to the very soil by the oppressive action of the poor laws. These persons, however new to crime, become quickly associated with old offenders; and the place of their punishment serves only to enable them to concoct mischief, become familiarized with wickedness, and to glory in the wanton demoralization of each other. In addition to this it may be safely asserted that their severest

most convenient and best regulated in the Kingdom ; having been built on the most approved model, and being celebrated for its excellent arrangements, neatness, and adaptation to the purposes intended. It is of a cruciform figure, each branch having passages, wards, and courts of its own, perfectly distinct from the rest of the building : which gives every facility for the separation of the different classes and characters of persons who are to be received within its walls. A board of Magistrates assemble every Monday for the purpose of attending its regulation, which is scrupulously regarded, and every day three hours are allowed (except on Sundays) for enabling the prisoners to see their friends.

punishment makes a bad impression on society. On the 4<sup>th</sup> of April, 1829, two Brothers were hanged pursuant to their sentence ; the one for firing at a Gamekeeper who continued to molest him in his retreat, though warned of the consequence, and the other for instigating him to do it. These men whose poverty and want of employment might have seemed some excuse for their poaching, by the present law could have none for thus using fire-arms. Their fate excited the most lively interest in the inhabitants of the town ; and notwithstanding the number of persons assembled to witness the wretched spectacle, horror and disgust were visible on the countenance of every respectable inhabitant, and "a legal murder" was the frequent appellation of the revolting sight.



*St. Peters Church.*



R. Howell, Junr. & Co.

J.H.M.D.

*County Jail.*



Prayers are read every morning to the prisoners; and divine service performed every Sunday by the regular chaplain, the Rev. G. H. Bowers, who is assiduously attentive to his important duty. The governor is Mr. Warner. It contains a tread-mill and house of correction.

Passing on, beyond the Jail, we come to a remarkably neat and comfortable-looking row of uniform brick alms houses, erected by the Trustees of the Harpur-Charity for aged and decayed persons whose claims are supposed to be of rather a superior kind to that of those persons who occupy the houses in Harpur-Street. These, which are familiarly denominated *The Best* and have already been mentioned as

#### THE NEW ALMS HOUSES,

are twenty in number; ten being generally appropriated for male, and ten for female inmates. They stand full facing the south, towards the distant river, over which they command a very pleasing view; the other side of the road being quite open to the fields. They are situated back a considerable distance from the road; having a beautiful piece of turf or lawn in front, planted round with thriving lime trees which cast an agreeable

shade on the shining walks beneath, and on the houses beyond them ; and present an appearance of neat and silent retirement exceedingly gratifying to the eye. The centre is furnished with a clock, and bears an inscription commemorative of its erection and endowment in 1800. The allowances are 10s. a week, and £3 per annum for clothing, to a single person ; and 15s. a week to a man and his wife with £2 additionally for the clothing of the wife. A Surgeon is appointed to all.

Beyond these alms houses, on the same side of the road, are situated two plain but handsome mansions, standing together and uniform with each other ; having a considerable area in front, with a carriage drive inclosed with open railwork, planted inside with flowering shrubs and evergreens ; and commanding a pleasing view of the Priory Farm and country beyond it. These houses are but newly built ; have a very light and elegant appearance ; and add greatly to the effect of the entrance on this side of the town. Beyond these the road proceeds towards Newport-Pagnel and Northampton ; having a cross road on the right leading to New-Town : we therefore return again, through Harpur-Street, to the head of the High-Street.

At the junction of Harpur-Street with the last-mentioned point, is situated St. Peter's Green : a large, triangular, and beautiful piece of grass plot, planted on the south and west with regular rows of lime trees, and having on the other side the remarkably rural and universally admired little

CHURCH OF ST. PETER,

facing the centre of the green. Completely round this triangle is a gravel walk ; and the road running towards the right in an easterly direction, having houses facing the green is an admired and favourite residence. But what perhaps has chiefly tended to increase this quarter in general estimation is the great attention and expense which have been bestowed by the Rector (the Rev. P. Hunt, L. L. D.) on the appearance of the church and churchyard : the latter of which, planted all over with flowering trees, evergreens, and aromatic shrubs, has more of the appearance of a rustic garden, being inclosed in front by a light and open iron palisading which exposes the whole range of the churchyard in beautiful relief beyond the green. But the choicest object in this beautiful coup d'ceil is certainly the church itself which, though small, ancient, and rather heavy in its appearance, yet having been re-beautified

and in several parts restored from former injuries ; and being planted all round with ivy regularly trained, interspersed with China roses ; has an effect which cannot fail to be highly gratifying to the eye of taste and the admirers of the beautiful. It stands back several yards from the green, and is furnished with a low, square tower in the centre between the nave and chancel, which, though apparently too massive for the size of the building, having been raised and embellished with small Saxon battlements and a projecting cornice, supported by a row of bracket arches under a billet moulding (to match the entrance) has acquired by these means a much lighter and even an elegant appearance. The principal entrance is by an arched Saxon portico of admirable workmanship, ornamented with triple mouldings of various devices, and crowned with small regular battlements. The interior is very confined, consisting of but one aisle, which, together with the chancel measures only about 25 yards in length. There is a small gallery at the west end, and the windows in the chancel are decorated with stained glass ; the principal one being very rich in colour and beautiful in arrangement, containing the *Ecce Homo*, *St. Peter*, *the Supper at Emmaus*, and *the Scourging of Christ*, with

many other curious catholic devices, surrounded with a brilliant diamond border. In the side windows are several curious coats of arms and other devices ; and in a small lancette window is a very singular assemblage of various designs. The chancel contains a mural tablet to the memory of Susanna, the wife of Thomas Knight who died 1754, aged about nineteen ; with a very pleasing poetical tribute to her beauty and virtues. The font is of considerable antiquity and in good preservation. By a charity of Mr. Robert Bamford, Rector of Little Barford, 1724, of which a memorial is erected in the church, nine loaves are given to the poor every Sunday. The churchyard contains several monuments worthy of notice. The Rectory is in the gift of the King. The tower has a clock and five small bells.

Adjoining the churchyard stands the parsonage house, the constant residence of the Rector. It is a plain cottage-like residence, remarkable only for that style of rural neatness, approaching to elegance, which is conspicuous in the grounds attached to it, and still more so in the interior of the house itself. It contains several beautiful paintings and engravings ; and among other works of art may be reckoned the most perfect casts

of the Gladiator, Antinoüs, Venus de Medicis, Apollo Belvidere, the Discobulus, and the Dancing Fawn: figures which perhaps it is impossible to view without mingled feelings of wonder at the fortitude, beauty, grace, majesty, energy, and gaiety which they so strongly depict. Dr. Hunt has also a very superior telescope with which he is in the habit of making observations. The garden, which is open to the green, is laid out in the most pleasing and elegant manner; and contains a beautiful sun-dial the design of which is as simple as Nature herself, and as delightful as the science it represents; and being visible from the walk, is an object of general interest and inquiry.\*

\* This dial is a representation of the armillary sphere, with its equatorial, tropical, and polar circles. The equator is represented by a broad band, on which is figured externally the signs of the zodiac; being divided internally into 24 parts, each denoting one hour, and subdivided into quarters. The axis is the gnomon; the shadow of which falling on the equator, thereby denotes, in the most pleasing manner, the hour throughout the year, from sun-rise to sunset. It is so arranged that, the angle of elevation being taken according to the latitude of the place, it will answer for any situation; the axis thus pointing directly to the celestial pole: the only time when the dial scale is completely overshadowed being the moment when the sun is exactly on the equator.

At a short distance beyond St. Peter's rectory is situated the chapel and establishment of the Moravian United Brethren. This institution, which is of considerable standing in Bedford and of a truly respectable rank, has not a very extensive connection in the town : the scrupulous regard which is paid to their admissions acting probably as a considerable check to the extension of their body.

#### THE MORAVIAN CHAPEL

is a plain, dull, and rather ancient-looking building ; with residences for the establishment attached to it on each side. That on the right, which was formerly occupied by the single brethren of the institution, is now appropriated as the residence of the minister ; and that on the left contains the apartments of the single sisters who here occupy themselves in various species of needle and other useful and ornamental work ; which produces a considerable income for the benefit of the institution and its parent interests : the work being universally admired, and generally sold at a high price. The interior of the chapel is plain ; having a small gallery at each end, and the pulpit standing in the centre fronting the two entrances, right and left, which are appropriated separately for the male and fe-

male parts of the congregation. The seats are all open, and consist merely of common forms with back frames : the females sitting on the right and the males on the left of the minister. The chapel has a small organ for the purpose of leading the congregation in the service, of which the singing consists of a highly pleasing and considerable proportion.

Behind the chapel is a burying ground, of a square form and considerable extent ; in which are deposited the deceased members of the connection, males and females separately : more however for the sake of uniformity than from any rule or principle. This silent dwelling of the dead is surrounded by a plantation of funereal yew, and, from the absence of all particular distinctions and the peculiar manner of its arrangement, is calculated to make a more solemn impression on the mind than the most pathetic epitaph or the deepest moral syllogism. The chapel was erected in 1751, and is now about to undergo a complete repair and beautification which will probably give it an appearance of considerable taste. The present minister is the Rev. J. Rogers, a descendant of the first minister of the congregation in Bedford. The chapel is nume-

rously attended at the evening service when the churches are generally closed. In front is a handsome modern palisading. The members of this institution live upon terms of the most regular social intercourse and religious communication with each other: there is also belonging to it a ladies' boarding school, on a very respectable and liberal principle, the profits of which go towards the funds of the society.

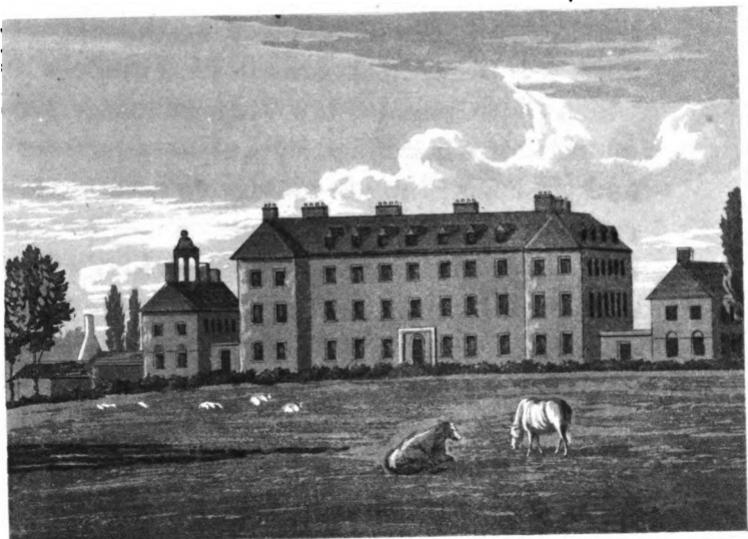
Proceeding onwards in this direction at a short distance we arrive at the north-eastern extremity of the town, where the main road, which leads to Cambridge by the way of Goldington and Eaton, is crossed by another which on the left takes a northerly direction to Kimbolton, and on the right runs straight towards St. Cuthbert's Church. This quarter which, at the lower extremity, is usually called St. Cuthbert's, though the upper part is in the parish of St. Peter, is a retired but not unpleasing part of the town; having several highly respectable residences, particularly that of George Peter Livius, Esq. the late highly esteemed Mayor, which, though inclosed by high walls and heavy gateways, having the inner area planted with trees and a lofty row surrounding it externally which commu-

nicate a rather gloomy effect to the appearance, is not without an air of grandeur to which some persons are very partial. This mansion is surrounded by extensive gardens and pleasure grounds containing several little rustic retreats in the shape of summer-houses, ice-houses, &c. which in the midst of its dark and woody shrubberies give the whole place an effect of grave and dignified retirement, which is heightened by the cawing of the rooks and cooing of the doves which have long selected these shady recesses for their regular and favourite residence.

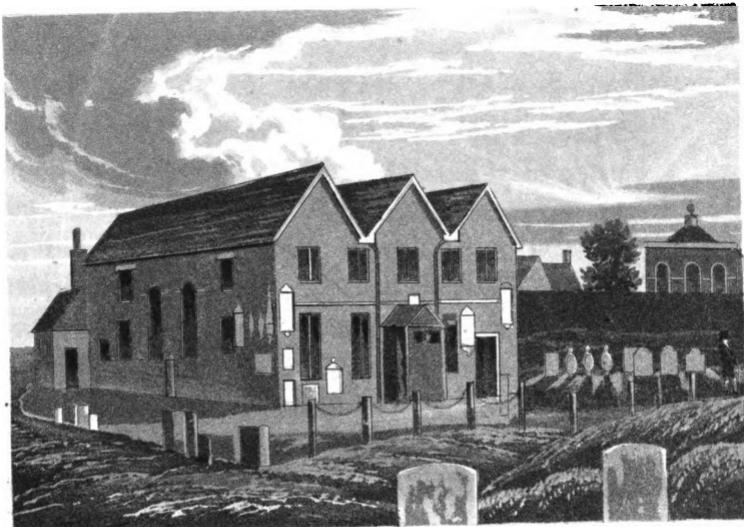
Beyond the section of the road already mentioned, at some distance on the left, is situated

#### THE HOUSE OF INDUSTRY.

This, which from the road has the appearance of a handsome and extensive mansion, is a large and regular building of brick; consisting of four stories in height, having a plain front, and the extreme wings slightly projecting, with detached out-buildings right and left; the furthest a chapel for the attendance of the inmates of the house, where divine service is performed every Sunday by a chaplain regularly appointed, and the other



*House of Industry.*



R. Hardwicke & Son.

J.H.M.Del.

*Old and New Meeting-houses.*



consisting of wash-houses and other convenient offices : the whole forming one of the most complete parochial establishments in the kingdom. Here the paupers of all the five parishes of the town meet with a humane and liberal treatment ; and are subjected to regulations of decency, labour, and manufacture, which tend materially to lessen the parish rates, and to benefit the habits and dispositions of its inmates. The main building is 136 feet long, and is capable of accommodating 200 persons. The basement contains, besides a committee room, master's room, and dining room 60 feet by 20, separate workrooms for the male and female inmates in which those bred to trades follow their regular occupation, and a school-room for the instruction of the juvenile portion who are too young to be set to work. The rest are generally occupied in garden and farm-work according to their abilities ; there being a considerable quantity of ground attached to the institution. It stands on a fine healthy situation, nearly on the summit of an extensive and gently rising eminence, fronting the town ; and presents to the eye a conspicuous object equally useful and ornamental. The building was erected in 1796, under an act of Parliament obtained two

years before ; and is governed by the inhabitants generally who are rated at ten pounds a year or possessed of an estate of the value of five hundred pounds : from these are chosen twelve Directors, four selected in regular rotation, the second Tuesday in May of every year. These directors assemble every Tuesday for the dispatch of business, and the Mayor for the time being is entitled to preside as an additional director.

We now return again to the head of the High-Street ; and pursuing the main road, in an oblique direction to the left, come to a long row of antiquated buildings on the right hand, open on the other side to spacious fields extending to the back of Harpur-Street. This quarter was, until lately, the furthest northern extremity of the town ; and in 1819 a Penitentiary or house of correction for the county was erected at its extreme end : but within the space of even a few months, the town has so rapidly increased in this direction, that the new quarter called the New-Town extends, at present, to nearly a quarter of a mile beyond it.

## THE COUNTY PENITENTIARY,

or New House of Correction, is surrounded by very lofty brick walls in the form of a square ; and is remarkable for nothing externally but a certain dull appearance of confinement, with a strong and close-wrought entrance, which sufficiently bespeaks the purpose of its erection. Here persons are confined for a greater or less period who are committed under the parish, game, and other laws, for the usual minor offences. The interior is divided into four courts or wards, for the purpose of separating the different classes. It is also provided with a mill having three separate tread wheels ; and a chapel in which prayers are read every morning, and divine service performed once every Sunday, alternately with the jail, by the same chaplain : a regular surgeon also attends both. The keeper's house is so arranged as to command every separate division. The establishment consists of the Keeper, a Matron, and a Turnkey : and is governed by the county magistrates.

Immediately beyond the Penitentiary commences the New-Town which, being entirely composed of newly-built brick houses, has a very neat and lively effect. The buildings

however, it is to be regretted, are not regular and uniform in their appearance; but, consisting chiefly of separate freeholds, each individual has followed his own taste, without regard to those in contiguity with himself; so that the beauty which arises from uniformity, and which (in rows of buildings particularly) communicate to a town an appearance of unity and wealth, is necessarily lost. Pleasant Place however, which is situated about the centre of it, is an exception to this remark; consisting of handsome uniform houses which reflect a certain air of importance on the whole. Before we come to this, on the opposite side of the way, is a newly-opened road running into the line leading to Northampton, which it enters beyond the New Alms Houses. Here on a considerable eminence, gradually declining to the south, is situated

THE CRESCENT;

consisting of large and genteel brick houses, uniformly built and arranged two and two; having small gardens in front tastefully arranged and enclosed with ornamental palisading, and having considerable grounds behind. From the altitude of this spot, which is very finely situated, the houses command

a view entirely over the town as well as the adjacent country, and enjoy a fine exhilarating air. The sweep of the crescent being an arc of a very extensive circle, does not interrupt the sight so much as similar ranges of buildings are liable to do; and having regular openings throughout, a fine current of the atmosphere is every way admitted, which must render the situation highly salubrious.

At a short distance beyond the Crescent occurs Canning-Street on the right, the new town continuing to extend itself beyond its junction with the next lateral or cross-road, the main road being the regular way of the Leeds Mail to the north. Here on the right occurs Chandos-Street diverging circularly to meet the bottom of Canning-Street: while the left-hand road, which is not yet entirely occupied with buildings, runs in a southerly direction and joins the road to Newport-Pagnel and Northampton. Thus finishes the complete circuit of this quarter of the town which surrounds the Crescent, as a centre, and encloses the Penitentiary, Jail, &c. far within its limits which, but a few years since, were considered as beyond the town.

From this point we again approach towards the High-Street; and passing the New and Old Alms-houses, Jail, &c. arrive at St. Lloyd's at the bottom of Harpur-Street. This part is chiefly remarkable for an extensive fire which destroyed the whole neighbourhood in 1802: and poor as it was at that time, it is greatly to be regretted that the immediate wants of the dispossessed inhabitants had not been brought to yield to a more extensive idea of the interests of the town, by the erection of a better class of houses than is here found, which are chiefly low brick cottages having only an upper story in the roof. There are in it, however, some houses of a much superior description; and from its being a very considerable thoroughfare from the entrance of the town towards the middle of the High-Street, it is to be expected that a few years will make important alterations in it.

At the bottom of Harpur Place, in a straight line with St. Paul's Square, we again meet with White-Horse-Street and Angel-Street which have been previously mentioned. The former being the greater thoroughfare is a place of considerable business among the humbler class of dealers. It contains four

small alms-houses, situated in a court on the left-hand side; being a transfer of an endowment by Thomas Hawes, Gent., dated 1619, for the benefit of three ancient widows of St. Paul's and one of St. Mary's; being "persons of good character and diligent resorters to divine worship." The endowment is but trifling; affording each inmate but 6*d.* per week and 7*s.* 6*d.* annually at Christmas: and it is to be hoped the Trustees of the Harpur-Charity will extend to these the liberal example they have adopted towards those in St. Lloyd's. The appointment is with the Mayor and Bailiffs of the town.

#### THE METHODIST CHAPEL,

situated about the middle of Angel-Street, is a neat and respectable brick-fronted building: and, though small and too closely connected with contiguous buildings, has a certain air of snugness in its appearance; and is by no means destitute of modest and unassuming beauty. This building which, by a stone placed in the centre of the upper part of the front, is dated 1804, is very neat and convenient in its interior arrangements; and capable of seating 500 persons. It is in general completely filled, the larger portion

of its congregation consisting chiefly of persons in the humbler walks of life ; though it has many highly respectable individuals connected with it, and commands an extensive connexion around the adjacent villages. The Methodists have been established in Bedford about 50 years ; and the late John Wesley, whose individual exertions in the cause mainly contributed towards it, and who was a frequent visitor in Bedford, used to observe that his doctrines would not prosper here because they met with no opposition. This may chiefly be ascribed to the secure and extensive footing which the Dissenters had previously taken in the town ; and who, differing more widely from the established church than the methodists, who rather view themselves in the light of reformers than seceders, had consequently pre-occupied the ground which the more influential class of persons would naturally adopt in their separation. To the honour of the town it ought to be observed that religious controversies are unknown among the ministers of the different denominations, who are in the habit of meeting each other in the most friendly manner and of preaching in each other's chapels monthly, in rotation, at what is termed an *Union* ; being a divine service on the first Monday evening in every

month for the purpose of promoting Christian Missions.

Near the chapel is the residence of the minister; a comfortable brick house, but very confined in point of situation. The Methodist and Moravian ministers not holding permanent appointments in the town, but only for a term at the direction of their synods or assemblies, are less calculated to hold that public influence in the town to which otherwise their respectability and situation would entitle them. Among their respective congregations however, this circumstance is probably the occasion of drawing still closer between them that social and religious compact which distinguishes them as members of an enterprising christian community. The present minister is The Rev. Joseph Lewis.

We come now to that head under which Bedford shines forth with a lustre peculiarly its own ; and which, even in the present day, it is presumed, is capable of reflecting a brilliancy on its name to which few if any towns of its magnitude in the kingdom can pretend : and this being the part which has been already mentioned as appointed for the

erection of the public schools, it will be proper to observe that the whole property from Well-Street to St. Paul's Square having been obtained by the Trustees for the purpose of erecting a set of regular, handsome, and uniform buildings, it is expected that this part will be considerably widened so as to leave a fine and open avenue into St. Paul's Square. As these designs, however, are not yet completed, and as the present schools in Angel-Street are appointed to come down and to be replaced on a more extensive and important scale, we shall pass onward to the Grammar School as being the first both with respect to its rank and its antiquity.

#### THE PUBLIC GRAMMAR SCHOOL

is situated in St. Paul's Square, and was founded by the Corporation of Bedford, in the year 1557, by virtue of letters patent from King Edward VI. This institution was endowed in 1566, by Sir William Harpur, (a native of Bedford and Lord Mayor of London) and by "Dame Alice, his wife," with a house and premises in Bedford, and land situated in the county of Middlesex, which having been let on building leases and lying now almost in the heart of London, has so

increased in value and added so largely to the funds by the falling in of the property at the expiration of the terms, as to have enabled the charity to extend itself so as to bestow its benefits on every class of the community. The arrangements of the whole have been effected by several Acts of Parliament from time to time, and are under the immediate superintendance of a Board of Trustees; of whom eighteen are elected by the inhabitants generally paying scot and lot, in a regular rotation of six in every year (consequently holding their office for three years) and the rest consist of the body corporate, the master and usher of the grammar-school, the Representatives for the town and county, and the Lord Lieutenant. The present building was erected in 1756, and is a plain respectable stone building with wrought quoins and a pediment in the centre. It consists of two rooms, an upper and a lower story; each about 40 feet in length and 20 in breadth: the windows are in the Elizabeth style, and the whole air of the building is sedate and becoming; in excellent keeping with the nature of the institution, and sufficiently ornamental to indicate its importance. Over the entrance to the lower school is a niche containing a statue of the founder in his civic

robes with the following inscription under it :

Ecce viator ! CORPOREA Effigies  
GULIELMI HARPUR, Equitis Aurati,  
Scholæ istius  
Quam cernis amplam et ornatam  
Munificentissimi Fundatoris.  
Si ANIMÆ Picturam spectare velis,  
In Chartâ Beneficiorum invenias  
Delineatum. \*

This school, though originally endowed for the support of one master and one usher for the purpose of teaching the boys of the town "grammar and good manners," at present promises to outvie every thing in the kingdom short of our collegiate institutions. Every thing that a liberal policy could suggest appears to have been done to support the rank and character of the school and the influence and respectability of the masters, who are under the appointment of the Warden and Fellows of New-College, Oxford, subject to removal for just and reasonable cause, and to the appointment of the

\* Passenger ! behold the *bodily* representation of Sir WILLIAM HARPUR, Knight : of this School, thus spacious and adorned as you perceive, the most munificent Founder. If you wish to behold the picture of his *mind*, in the list of his Benefactions you will find it depicted.

Trustees in case the college fail to appoint within three months of any vacancy that may occur. The Trustees have seconded the College so far as to allow the master the privilege of taking an unlimited number of private boarders ; and have built extensive dining and sleeping rooms for their accommodation : and by a late act of Parliament have allowed two of those private boarders to hold college exhibitions on the foundation of the charity. The eligibility or right of sending boys to be educated in this school consists in a town birth, a rental of £10, or the possession of a real estate of that value for which any rates may be paid. The boys must be the children of persons residing in the town, and not less than eight or more than fourteen years of age. Every thing (including books, stationery, coals, candles, &c.) is entirely free ; and the college is required to send annually on the first Thursday in May, two proper and efficient persons to examine into the state and progress of the boys, and to receive any complaints that may be made of the management of the school : which examination is to be public. At this examination vacancies that occur in the college exhibitions are regularly filled : the charity allowing eight exhibitions of £80 per annum each, to be held at either of the Universities of

Cambridge, Oxford, or Dublin. Six of these exhibitions must be held by the boys educated in the school on the foundation ; the other two are at the private disposal of the master. The exhibitioners must annually present testimonials of their good and diligent conduct while at college, or otherwise are liable to lose the benefit of the institution : they are to remain at college four years and keep full terms in each year. The present establishment consists of the head master (Rev. John Brereton, D.C.L.) salary £250 per annum, with 5 guineas per annum for every free boy six months in the school ; the usher, (Rev. Thomas Brereton, B.C.L.) salary £140 per annum, with 4 guineas per annum for every free boy in the school ; mathematical master, (Mr. E. Swan) £100 per annum, with 3 guineas per annum for every boy of 14 years of age studying mathematics. A writing master and a French master are also allowed by the Trustees : the former receives 2 guineas per annum and the latter 4 guineas per annum on each boy under his instruction. The first and second masters have residences attached : they are required to be clergymen of the Church of England, or graduates either of Oxford or Cambridge ; and are Trustees of the Charity by virtue of their office. The number of

free boys educated in the grammar school at present is about 60, and the number of private boarders about equal. Prize-books to the amount of £20 are allowed to be annually distributed as the rewards of merit.

#### THE ENGLISH SCHOOL,

which was formerly kept in the lower apartment of the before-mentioned building, has been lately removed to another place provided for it (*pro tempore*) for the purpose of accommodating the increased number of pupils which the enlarged state of the town and its important advantages are rapidly sending in. This school, which appears to have been instituted as a branch of the foregoing, has been found of such importance as to require separate provisions ; as it was naturally discovered that, for all those intended for general life and business, the benefits of the best classical education were not to be placed in competition with those habits of practical and commercial life which are best attained by what is usually termed an English education. Accordingly in 1820 it was found necessary to remodel it by the appointment of a new set of masters, and by enlarging the system of instruction so as to embrace a

complete English, mathematical, and commercial education. The present school is situated in Angel-Street, near where the new erections are to take place; and which, it is probable, with the great change which will be effected in its appearance, will receive a change of name of a more significant application. As it is impossible to describe what is not at present in existence, it may be sufficient to observe that the new school which is forthwith to be commenced will probably be, in every way, becoming its character and importance,—the richness of the institution, and the improvements of the age. The course of instruction comprises English grammar and composition, the French language, history, geography and the globes, writing, arithmetic, and practical mathematics. The establishment consists of a head master, (Mr. W. H. White, several years teacher of mathematics at Alfred House Academy, Camberwell) second master or usher, (Mr. J. H. Matthiason, also several years mathematical tutor at the Public Grammar School, Warminster) and a third master or assistant (Mr. C. Hall). The right of education and the age of admission are the same as in the grammar school; and the number of boys at present in the school is about 120. Prizes

are also allowed in this school to meritorious boys. The first and second masters are furnished with free residences. The act providing the salaries of the master, usher, and assistant, does not allow that of the head master to exceed £200, or that of the assistant £120 per annum. The principle of the masters being trustees, or of allowing premiums according to the number of pupils, is not yet extended to this school; but a committee is appointed to superintend its general regulations.

#### THE HOSPITAL

forms a very conspicuous branch of the original endowment in connexion with the public schools. It was instituted for the "sustentation" of poor children of the town, who are here received and maintained; provided with clothing and education; and at a proper age apprenticed to some trade or business of their own choosing or selection, subject however to the approbation of the Trustees. The present building is situated near the Preparatory School; and, though plain and neat, has more of the appearance of a private establishment than of a public building. The number of children at present supported in the house

is 26 boys and girls : though by the provisions of the last Act of Parliament for the extension of the Charity, the number may be increased to 50. These children are chosen by the Trustees from the families of such poor persons belonging to the town as appear to be entitled to the most consideration. The establishment consists of a master and mistress, (Mr. and Mrs. Furze) the former of whom is also master of the Preparatory School, in which the boys under his direction are consequently educated. The united salary is £100 per an. together with all the benefits of the house. Mistress, £20 per an. in addition. The house contains on the basement story a committee-room, in which the Trustees hold their meetings, and a hall for the reception of the applicants who attend ; a spacious kitchen, and a parlour. The other parts of the house are fitted up with every regard to the accomodation of those who are to reside in it ; and the whole establishment is conducted with the greatest order and decorum. The children are not to be admitted under 8 years of age : the dress of the boys consists of a dark blue coat, waistcoat, smallclothes and cap ; and that of the girls is a stuff gown and bonnet of the same colour ; which dress, set off by their white collars and tip-

pets, has a very neat and pleasing effect. They are to be educated in the principles of the Church of England ; the master and mistress are always to attend with them at church ; and the Trustees are required to provide them with pews necessary for their accommodation.

#### THE PREPARATORY SCHOOL,

situated in the same line, is a spacious brick building erected in 1816 by the Trustees for the reception of the more juvenile portion of the community, until they are of a proper age to be admitted into the higher schools. It is a neat and respectable building ; and has a lantern window at the top for the double purpose of admitting air and light : but the effect of its appearance is certainly mean, on account of its sides standing towards the street ; and being rendered diminutive by the declivity of the roof. In this school all the children of the town may be admitted at the early age of 5 years : and here also those may be received who, not legally belonging to the town, are consequently ineligible to the other schools. It is conducted on the Madras system of mutual instruction by the boys themselves ; and consequently saves the

labour of the master, except in the general state and discipline of the school. An assistant is also allowed by the Trustees. The number of children educated here is generally large, amounting nearly to 300: and includes the boys belonging to the Hospital. The instruction of such a number is necessarily confined in a great measure to the first elements of education. The salary of the master, including his emoluments and privileges as master of the Hospital, has been previously stated. That of the assistant is not fixed. Prizes are allowed at the annual examinations of the Trustees.

#### THE GIRLS' SCHOOL.

The Preparatory School is open three afternoons in the week, at which time the boys belonging to it have holidays, for the purpose of instructing the girls belonging to the town in reading, writing, sewing, &c. This partial education, however beneficial it may be in a degree, it will immediately be perceived is not only imperfect in that degree, but in all respects inadequate to the wants of the female part of the community; and particularly deficient with respect to that portion of it whose rank entitles them to a fair and libe-

ral competition with the more favoured males of their own families for that mental cultivation and intellectual accomplishment of which they are by no means less susceptible; and which, particularly in the present state of things, appear to be absolutely requisite to place them on a level with those for whom they are destined to be wives and mothers, and over whom, in every social and moral point of view, they must necessarily exercise a most important influence. How female education could have been thus slighted, seems almost unaccountable, when we consider that the very gift, in the original foundation of the endowment, runs in the name of "Sir William Harpur and *Dame Alice*, his wife," who, certainly in being thus associated by name in the bequest, bears ample testimony not only to the share she personally took in it, but to the effect which had she been otherwise minded, either from narrowness of feeling or a want of education in herself, her opposition to it would have probably produced: and surely in return for the kindness of that lady by supporting her husband in so good a cause, one of the most obvious compliments that could have been paid to the worthy female donor seems to be that of providing a suitable education for those of her

own sex. Of course the fault lies with the *first improvers* of the charity ; and there can be no doubt that the present Trustees, whose views on the subject of education are of the most enlarged nature, will take an opportunity as they dispose of the extensive plans of improvement which they have at present under discussion, of atoning for the neglect of their predecessors by raising a lasting monument to themselves in the erection of schools for the suitable education of the female portion of the community on equal principles with those already existing ; and which are, particularly for the higher classes, so liberally and handsomely supported. The present class of girls who are in the habit of attending is seldom so high as those whose parents can afford to give them a regular education : consequently most even of those in trade and business, whose family consists of daughters, are at an annual expenditure of a considerable sum to obtain that (and perhaps out of their own town) which, had they been sons, they would be entitled to receive without any expense and under the parental eye. The number of girls attending this school at present is about 50 ; though until within the last two years it amounted nearly to 200 : a great falling off having taken place in conse-

quence of the Trustees discontinuing to allow prizes for good attendance and rewards of merit. Something of the kind appearing necessary to induce the parents to sacrifice the hard-earned and miserable but immediate gains of lace-making to merely a prospective benefit in which themselves appear to have no direct advantage. Those also who attend are generally of the smallest class. The salary of the mistress (Miss Smith) by the present regulations cannot exceed £50 per annum. All these appointments are for life; subject to removal for just and reasonable causes: and the Trustees are to allow to any master or mistress, who may become incapacitated by age or infirmity, an annuity of not less than one third the respective salary.

Here ends the list of the present public Harpur-Schools; in all which the education, with respect to those who receive it, is entirely free, without any fee, reward, or gratuity whatever. So that every boy in the town, from the meanest to the highest rank, is provided with every thing necessary to qualify him for that station in life to which his parents may think proper to devote him; without the least cost or charge to them whatever. As all these buildings however

(with the exception of the Grammar School) are appointed to come down, and to be re-edified on a more regular and extensive plan ; it ought to be observed that *additional schools* are also to be erected, which will afford facilities for a more complete classification : so that those to whom an enlarged education would be unnecessary, may avoid the tedium of working through elements which their time at school would not allow them to complete ; while those whose parents wish their education to be more extensive, or to be more thoroughly established in such superior branches of learning as may be more particularly adapted to their immediate designs in life may have an opportunity of completing their design without that prejudice to their education which must generally follow to all those instructed in large classes, and confined to a certain rate of labour ; or bound to a completion of their studies within a certain lapse of time. This appears to be the more necessary as every boy whose parents have been resident householders ten years in the town, is entitled to become a candidate for the *apprentice fees*, which will be subsequently alluded to under the general notice of the Harpur-Charity ; and which, being allowed only to those between 13 and 14 years of age,

parents in needy circumstances are ready to embrace, the moment their children become eligible: while those who do not stand so much in need, or valuing a few years more at school above the premium (£30) which is allowed, would frequently be glad to avail themselves of the choice, though the necessary attention which is certainly its due cannot easily be given where such boys are under the disadvantage of being classed indiscriminately with a large number of the rest. This disadvantage the Trustees have already perceived in the most enlightened point of view: and it is not perhaps too much to indulge the anticipation that, with respect particularly to practical mathematics and English literature (those sciences which form the very essence of active and superior life) the English School may ultimately become as eminent as it is calculated to be useful.

#### THE GREEN COAT SCHOOL.

This charity was instituted by Gabriel Newton, an Alderman of the corporation of Leicester, who appears to have been connected by marriage with the Hawes family in Bedford whose charities make a conspicuous figure with their name, and of whom memorials may

be found both in St. Paul's and in St. Mary's church. The endowment, dated 1760, consists of the sum of twenty six pounds per annum for the purpose of clothing twenty-five poor boys of the Town of Bedford, without respect to parish, with a green coat, waistcoat, and breeches, and such caps, stockings, and other apparel as may be thought proper, (the materials to be not under a specified price,) and for teaching them reading, writing, arithmetic, and psalmody. The boys must be between seven and fourteen years of age; the children of persons belonging to the established church; not having received any sort of parish relief. The appointment of the boys, and also of the master, lies with the corporation of Bedford; and they are regularly to attend divine service in such church or chapel as the corporation shall direct, where they are required to tone the responses: such church or chapel being one in which the creed of St. Athanasius is publicly read on the proper days appointed by the Rubric. In case all these conditions should not be complied with the corporation of Leicester are entitled to take away the endowment; and they are authorised to appoint proper persons to see that they are fulfilled and to direct the application of the funds from time to time.

The boys at present are educated in the Preparatory School : the conditions not disabling them from receiving the benefits of the Harpur-Charity, either with respect to the education, or the apprenticeship to which they may be entitled.

#### THE LEITH CHARITY SCHOOL.

While on the subject of education, it may be proper here to notice what in general passes under the denomination merely of a charity, the extensive Harpur-Schools seeming to swallow up every minor institution of the kind : but in justice to the founders, and particularly as it seems to bear on the subject of *female education* and to show that in this, as in that extensive charity, female benevolence has acted an important part and amply evinced its value and importance to their sex, we ought not by a misnomer to suffer it to be overlooked. The Rev. Alexander Leith, (prebendary of Lincoln, rector of St. Cuthbert's, and vicar of St. Paul's, Bedford,) and Martha his wife, by deed dated 1735, gave the sum of £135, Mary Reddall £200, and Letitia Hawes £30 for the support of a charity school in which are to be taught 20 poor children of the Town of Bedford and parishes of St.

Paul and St. Cuthbert; namely, fourteen boys and six girls, (of whom ten boys and five girls form the proportion of St. Paul's :) and also 10s. each for preaching three sermons annually on Good Friday, and the festivals of St. Barnabas and St. Thomas. The endowment, which appears to have been conveyed in land situated in the parishes of Barford and Cardington, in trust to the vicars and rectors of the five parishes, has doubtless been always amply sufficient for the purpose; and it is greatly to be regretted that with the means of improvement it has not been considerably increased. By an Act passed for inclosing the parish of Great Barford a few years since, it was considerably injured, so that in addition to a considerable sum to be paid in part of the expenses, the allotment of land in lieu was of a very inferior nature. The present income is rather more than £40 per annum, the whole of which, after payment of the sums appointed for sermons, is allowed to the clerk of St. Paul's parish for the purposes of the endowment; who himself provides a place of instruction, school books, &c. and is punctual in keeping up the number of his pupils notwithstanding the inducements to parents of sending their children to the larger schools, which might

be supposed sufficient to do away with the necessity of keeping up the institution. With respect to the girls, however, it ought to be observed that the applications for their instruction are pressingly numerous and constant; and that the master is regularly under promises from six to ten deep before he is enabled to admit them. The appointment of the children lies with the clergymen of their respective parishes.

Should this institution ever meet with the encouragement it deserves, so as to partake of the improvements of modern education, the first and most obvious step would be the separation of the male and female classes into distinct schools. This might easily be effected by the Trustees of the Harpur-Charity admitting the boys into their schools, and incorporating *in lieu of them* a class of girls upon the present charity; so as to render it exclusively a girls' school. The number restricted would always render it effective, and even select; so as to afford under an approved and competent mistress an education to the lower class of females which, in point of real usefulness, would probably vie with the best that could be obtained. Thus would ample honour be done to the worthy female donors,

while the whole institution would be considerably benefitted: as there appears no necessity whatever for keeping up that part of it which provides for the education of the boys, who are eligible to the other public schools.

#### THE COUNTY HALL

is situated beyond the Grammar School, on the south side of St. Paul's Square. It was erected in 1753, and is a neat-looking stone building, ascended by steps, having a pedimented centre with plain wings: it is however rather heavy in its general proportions, and until lately was by no means convenient for the purposes required. Here the assizes, town and county sessions, and other courts and public meetings are regularly held. The centre consists of a spacious hall of lofty altitude occupying the whole depth of the building; and contains a full-length portrait of the late patriotic and public-spirited Samuel Whitbread, Esq. M. P. well painted, of the natural size, and elegantly mounted in a gold frame. On each side it communicates by doors with the adjoining wings, of which one is used as the civil and the other the criminal court. A spacious and handsome room for the use of the grand jury has lately been added

at the back of the building, with other convenient apartments below, which have materially improved its general accommodations ; it is however to be regretted that the courts are still too much confined, and that the general proportions of the building, which are deficient in style, have not been altered and enlarged. These courts used formerly to be open to the hall, at which time the Assizes (which alternately succeed those of Aylesbury and Buckingham) were regularly attended by a great influx of strangers ; but since they have been enclosed, so as to admit but few persons, this attendance has fallen off, to the considerable loss and regret of the town. There is still great want of accommodation for the number of those who at such times require admission ; and who, finding themselves excluded, are too often driven to vent their wounded feelings at the public houses of the town : being thereby compelled to spend money which perhaps they could ill, if at all, afford to do. On such occasions they are often seen weeping and lamenting at the idea of having their friends and connexions tried at a criminal court which they perhaps have not the means of entering ; and in the acuteness of their sympathy giving themselves up to imaginations which a

more open exposure would greatly tend to dissipate and destroy. This is certainly an evil towards the correction of which something still seems due to public feeling: and as our courts of justice are *de jure* open, it seems hard that they should not be so *de facto*; and that every man personally interested in a cause should not have the satisfaction of seeing the laws of his country administered. This being the only house of public assembly in the town (the Guildhall having been taken down under the act for the improvement of the town, and not yet being replaced) it has become a place of general public business and, frequently, of amusement; being well adapted for assemblies, lectures, &c. It is under the superintendance of the county magistrates, and is certainly an ornament to the situation in which it stands.

#### ST. PAUL'S CHURCH

which, it has been already observed, occupies the middle area of the square, is a large and handsome Gothic building: consisting of a double nave and double chancel, over which rises a square tower supported on massive arches and crowned with a light and lofty octagonal steeple surmounted with a weather-

cock of large dimensions; but which, in consequence of its altitude, does not appear remarkable. This church which, in the reign of King Henry VIII, became the cathedral church of a suffragan bishop, appears to have been a collegiate church some time before the Conquest. The whole style of the building, though highly ornamental, is antique; and from every appearance is similar now to what it was in its original state. Both the church and the tower are crowned with battlements; the sides are furnished with a double row of windows which give the building a light and lofty appearance. The lower windows are large and have formerly been handsome; but bear evidence of considerable injury: the greater part of their tracery being entirely gone. The side battlements have formerly been furnished with six handsome pinnacles; one at each corner, and one over each centre division of the windows; of which there are five places or divisions: the places of the second being occupied by a beautiful portico on each side, exactly opposite each other; the line of which, crossing the chief aisles of the nave, thereby gives the whole the form of a cross. These porticoes are also furnished with pinnacles and battlements, in the same style as

the church itself. The entrance to that on the north side has over it a niche of beautiful workmanship, but the statue it contained (probably the Virgin Mary) has been removed; and in all likelihood was demolished in the wreck which the zeal of the Reformation inflicted on all those images of which such a superstitious veneration was prescribed by the catholic church. The entrance at the southern portico is by a flat Gothic doorway, at the corners of which may be traced designs which, but for the rough hand of time, would appear to throw considerable light on the history of the building; but of which little more than conjecture can now be formed from the imperfect portcullis on the one side and the rampant lion on the other which evidently relate to the feudal power of the castle and its Norman barons. Over this portico is an apartment with a flat battlemented top; on each side of which is a beautiful niche; one containing a statue of St. Paul and the other that of St. Peter. This apartment, which is generally called "the evidence room," is used as a place of deposit for the archives of the corporation. Two noble windows at the west end of the church, opposite the aisles, are handsome specimens of the Gothic tracery, and in ex-

cellent preservation : one of these has under it a small arched door with Saxon capitals. They have lately been more exposed by the removal of several trees by which they were obscured. The interior is equally ornamental with its external appearance : the roof is supported in the middle by five arches on lofty clustered pillars, answering to the five external divisions of the windows ; and the whole is surrounded by a double band of foliated carved work. Over each pillar projects a turret corbel bearing a shield, on which stands the carved figure of a saint having at his feet a stork : the general emblem of piety. These figures support the principal beams ; the intermediate beams, over the points of the arches, being also ornamented with smaller figures ; and the cross-beams in the middle being ornamented at each intersection, alternately, with a figure and a flowery cross. The pulpit is attached to the second pillar, between the naves and facing the west, and is of an octagonal form and of solid stone ornamented with Gothic tracery. The church has a gallery completely round except in the centre of the southern side, in which situation is placed the state pew of the corporation. This pew is large and handsome : being com-

posed of polished wainscot; containing separate benches for the Aldermen and Bailiffs, with the Mayor's seat in the centre; over which, on a beautifully carved shield, are delineated the Arms of the town. In the gallery at the west end is a fine and powerful organ by Smith, erected in 1715. It contains seven hundred pipes and has lately been improved at a considerable expense. The chancel is also divided into two parts: that on the south is used as the Archdeacon's court at the regular visitations; and that on the north appropriated exclusively for the Communion. The latter is exceedingly antique and venerable in its appearance; and contains twenty curiously carved stalls of polished oak, besides seats on each side, apparently for the chantry belonging to the original collegiate foundation. It has in it several ancient tombs and monuments; particularly an altar-tomb on the north of the altar, which has been supposed to be that of Simon de Beauchamp the founder of Newnham Abbey. On the north wall is a marble monument in memory of Thomas Christie, Esq., dated 1697, the founder of the Old Alms Houses, for the support of which he gave the great tithes to the vicars, as was previously mentioned. He was member of

Parliament for the town. On the south wall is a curious likeness of Andrew Dennys, a former vicar; and also rector of St. John's; with a long eulogium of his merits, but now nearly illegible. The pavement contains inscriptions of several of the former vicars; and one in particular in Gothic letters and old French rhyme to the memory of one Muriel Calt, who appears to have been a great benefactor to the college; having authority to offer forty days of pardon to whoever should pray for the good of his soul:—a lasting monument of the ignorance on one side and of the corruption on the other which could arm a profane mortal with the fancied attributes of the Deity; and for the sordid gains of *money* dispense to one who himself required pardon, the power of pardoning the sins of others, who, whatever might be their crimes, should merely comply with an external observance under the influence perhaps of the vilest motives. Adjoining it, on the north side, is the vestry; over which, and communicating with it by a circular flight of extremely narrow and difficult steps, is an apartment occupied as a library; and containing at present about one thousand volumes on various subjects, but chiefly on theology and ecclesiastical his-

tory. This library which was instituted about the beginning of the last century, at which time, from their present appearance, many of the books must have been in a good and even handsome state of preservation, has unfortunately been suffered to languish unnoticed and almost unknown ; although many of the books are highly curious and valuable. It contains the works of many of the ancient Fathers ; several of the Latin classic authors ; a large proportion on ecclesiastical and controversial subjects ; and a considerable number on general literature, history, and science ; and by a spirited management might be made even now an important nucleus for a general library ; the want of which has long been felt in the town. It was originally deposited in St. John's Church ; and from various circumstances appears to have been placed under the direction of the corporation, to whom that living appertains : but for want of a proper place has been removed to this, where, having no librarian to attend to it, it has doubtless been injured and mutilated to a great degree, without any friend to literature and human nature to rise and rescue it from that destruction to which it seems to have been doomed. The south chancel also contains several monuments worthy of notice.

At the east end is a monument of Thomas Hawes and others of his family, who were all benefactors of the poor, dated 1689. Over the door is a handsome monument to the memory of John Peck, Gent. a magistrate and three times Mayor of the town, who died 1713. Opposite to this is a plain but massive marble monument, erected in 1796 by the Trustees of the Harpur-Charity, to the memory of Sir William Harpur and Dame Alice, his wife, the great benefactors to the town ; over which are sculptured their likenesses in medallion, and under it the Arms of the family emblazoned. Their tomb is situated near the window on the south side of the chancel ; and justly deserves to be regarded with gratitude and veneration. Between this and the opening into the body of the church are memorials of various other temporal and spiritual benefactors of the poor ; whose charities, recorded both in "*loaves and sermons,*" at each returning sabbath bring forth their pleasing stores : thus affording the most beautiful application, after divine service, of those truths which they have previously had an opportunity of hearing from their minister, and of which "to the poor the gospel is preached" is one of those which alone must designate its divinity. Over the northern

side of this part stands the tower. It has a good peal of eight bells, and a large and handsome four-faced clock, provided with chimes which perform every third hour, and are changed every week ; having six changes. The tune which is usually appropriated for the sabbath day is generally known by the name of " Bedford ; " and is presumed to be a native and original. The height of the spire is about 180 feet ; the extreme length of the church 147 feet ; and the breadth 45 feet. The living is in the gift of the Right Hon. Lord Carteret. The present vicar is the Rev. James Donne, M. A. Bedford is an Arch-deaconry of its own : the present learned and efficient officer is the Rev. H. K. Bonney, D.D. The churchyard has several entrances ; the principal of which are at the south-west and north-west angles : consisting of square pillars supporting urns on the top, and having an open iron gate. It contains several very ancient and curious relics. The wall and rail-work which surround it have previously been mentioned.

Beyond St. Paul's Church we again come into the High-Street, near the bridge : having made the entire circuit of the town. There are several lanes of little consequence ;

of which the principal one is Castle-Lane, a little higher up on the opposite side of the way ; in which a new Calvinistic chapel has lately been erected. Horne-Lane leading from the west side of St. Paul's Square to Batt's-Ford, a landing place or quay which has lately been erected for the general purposes of the town ; near the bottom of which is Gravel Lane, running in a northward direction to the end of Well-Street; near which commences Danes's-Lane, proceeding in the same direction into St. Lloyd's, nearly opposite the Jail. From this quarter also, at the end of Harpur-Place, and in a straight direction from St. Lloyds, proceeds another lane forming the back of Harpur-Street, and across the High-Street, straight towards St. Cuthbert's.\* These are all that may be termed the public sections of the town ; and having thus made the complete topographical tour of Bedford, it remains still to point out a few of those places which are more remarkable for their importance or antiquity ; and which, not lying within the boundaries of the town or the general line of observation, it will be proper here to give particular notice.

\* Called by Speed, *Lurke*, now corrupted to *Luck's-Lane*. All these divisions are essentially the same as they were two hundred years ago.

## THE INFIRMARY

is one of those institutions which alone would reflect credit and importance on a town, not only from the appearance of the building itself, but also from the interest which every one connected with the town, the county, or the cause of benevolence in general, must feel for an institution which has been erected, endowed, and supported, for the relief of the indigent sick and injured sufferer with a spirit that confers eternal honour on the contributors. This building stands at a short distance from the town on the road leading to Ampthill; and was erected in 1803, chiefly by the liberality and exertions of that spirited and ardent character, the late Samuel Whitbread, Esq. M. P.; whose indefatigable labour and disinterested sacrifice for the accomplishment of that glorious and important object are beyond all praise. It was originally capable of containing 50 patients; but by the great activity and interest taken in the cause by Dr. Thackeray, the medical director, the calls upon its benefits having been considerably extended it was found necessary that enlargements should be made, which were accordingly carried into effect in 1826; so that it is

now capable of receiving thirty additional patients, besides having been furnished with cellars, pantries, offices, &c. so completely adapted to every occasion as to leave nothing in those respects to be desired. By the same spirited exertions, improvements in the funds to a commensurate extent have been projected, with the liberal view of throwing it open to the adjoining counties; so that it is expected a short period will elapse ere we shall see the beautiful example of a small county endowed with a great general infirmary; and extending the blessings of its influence not only to a large and unlimited sphere of suffering indigence and misery, but forcibly inculcating the sublimest doctrine of Christianity to all classes of individuals, and practically preaching benevolence and love among mankind, in that "small still voice" which though not uttered to the outward ear will be inwardly whispered to each conscious heart, "go and do thou likewise." The house is beautifully situated on a high commanding ground; and surrounded with open and extensive gravel walks, provided with chairs, &c. for the convenience of the invalids. Within, every thing is arranged with the utmost propriety, with regard to the health and every other thing connected with

the state and circumstances of the afflicted inmates ; one side of the house being appropriated to the male and the other to the female patients. The different wards are pleasingly distinguished by the names of different benefactors to the institution, as the Russell, the Bedford, the Howard, the Whitbread, &c. These names being painted over the door, have a novel and peculiarly interesting effect, by the association of ideas which are thereby naturally produced. There are warm, cold, shower, and vapour baths for the patients ; as well as baths for public accommodation on payment of a certain sum. A medical library has lately been formed under the auspices of Dr. Thackeray, which at present consists of about 1000 volumes containing many valuable standard works ; and connected with it is a small, but interesting, anatomical museum. Resident pupils are allowed by the institution ; and under the combined direction of the highly experienced members of the faculty, who gratuitously attend it, it cannot fail to be an admirable school of surgery and medicine. The situation is finely chosen, in an open cheerful aspect and between two public roads, at either of which the building may be entered. It consists at present of three sides of a qua-

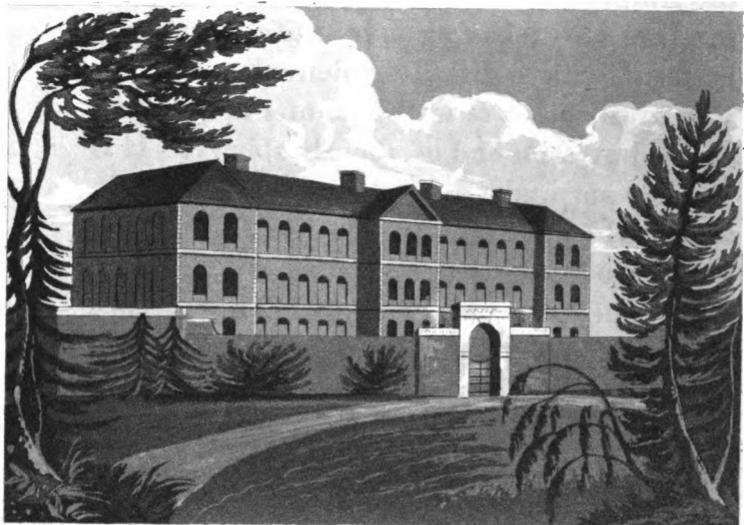
drangle, having an open area at the back ; at which side it is entered through an avenue of trees lately planted, which, when grown, will have a very pleasing appearance. The front, which is the original part, is placed towards the south, and has a beautiful piece of turf or lawn before it, sloping gently towards the road. It is very plain ; having three stories or ranges of windows, with a small doorway in the centre, over which is a niche for the ultimate purpose of a statue of the founder ; and over it is the following appropriate inscription :—“ I was a stranger and ye took me in, I was sick and ye visited me.” It is now capable of accommodating 80 patients ; and, as a building, has a substantial and massive appearance. It is of brick with stone quoins, and wants nothing but a portico in front, to render it of pleasing proportions to the eye. It is conducted by a board of Governors, who meet on the first Monday in every month for general business, and once annually for passing the accounts. The funds arise from annual subscriptions and voluntary contributions. The income for 1830 being £2671 15s. 5d. in which is included the yearly collection at a sermon preached in St. Paul’s church, for the benefit of the institution. Persons

making donations of twenty guineas or upwards are governors for life; and contributors of two guineas annually, for the time of their subscription. Such are entitled to admit annually one in-patient and four out-patients to the benefit of the institution, and subscribers of one guinea annually to admit three outpatients only. The medical establishment consists of Joseph Thackeray, Esq. M.D. physician, Messrs. C. Short, and J. Pulley, surgeons, whose attendance is gratuitous, and the house surgeon and Secretary (Dr. G. Witt: salary 60 guineas per annum.) The household consists of a matron (Mrs. Llewellyn: salary £40 per annum,) with the requisite number of day and night nurses, and other domestics and attendants, for whom a superannuation fund has lately been instituted. W. H. Whitbread, Esq. (M.P. for the town) is the Perpetual President; and the Duke of Bedford, Grand Visitor of the institution, which is invested in the Duke of Bedford, the Lord Grantham, Francis Pym, Esq. and W. H. Whitbread, Esq. as permanent trustees. Most of the nobility and gentry of the county are enrolled among its benefactors and supporters, among whom the Whitbread family is certainly the most conspicuous, as having been the original founders of the Institution,





*Infirmary North Front.*



*R. Hardi Jun. Sc.*

*J. H. M. D.*

*Lunatic Asylum.*

for which purpose the grandfather of the present Mr. Whitbread, gave (in 1797) £10,000 towards its first establishment. In 1826 the Marquess of Tavistock gave £2000 towards the enlargement, in lieu of the profligate expenditure of money at the election. The total number of *in* and *out*-patients for the year ending in June 1830, was 1652: of whom 1153 were returned cured; 150 relieved; and 259 remaining on the books.

#### THE LUNATIC ASYLUM.

The Asylum is a large and handsome-looking building, for the reception of pauper, criminal, and private lunatics. It stands also on the Ampthill road, at a short distance beyond the Infirmary; having a beautiful shrubbery in front with a broad semicircular carriage way to the outer or wall-gate of the building, entered at each end of the shrubbery. It is entirely surrounded by a lofty wall of brick, within which the building rises at a distance of about 200 ft. from the road; also built of brick, with stone quoins and facings. The entrance is handsome, and the façade of the building might be considered as particularly light and beautiful but for the upper segments of the blank and arched windows, which alone are

open ; and which, being furnished with iron bars, present the revolting idea of confinement, notwithstanding the general air of grandeur which is reflected from the whole. It consists of one main building having a projecting centre with a pediment, and terminated with two projecting wings uniformly with the centre. It has three stories, exclusive of kitchens, cellars, and convenient offices below. The middle part is occupied by the superintendant and household of the establishment ; having a committee room for the visiting magistrates, who attend the first Monday in every month. The right side is occupied by the male and the left by the female patients ; each individual having a separate apartment. The wings have each a common sitting room, hospital, and nursery for their respective departments ; and the house is furnished with all those necessary conveniences suitable either to the physical or medical treatment of the unfortunate inhabitants : being well arranged, excellently ventilated, and provided with extensive grounds for air and exercise ; as well as a large garden capable of affording an ample supply of vegetable produce for the consumption of the whole establishment. It is supported chiefly by its own funds arising from the payment of the diffe-

rent classes of its inmates : county paupers being received at nine shillings, out-county twelve, and private individuals from one to three guineas per week ; the deficiency being made up from the treasury of the county. It is capable of receiving 66 patients, and the number at present is about 52. It is placed in a fine open situation ; and, as a building, is a great ornament to the town, and a conspicuous object from a considerable distance round. The architect was the late Mr. Wing, of Bedford. It was opened at Midsummer, 1812, under the statute 48 Geo. III, cap. 96, being the first county institution of the kind erected under the provisions of the Act of Parliament on the subject. The establishment consists of a superintendent, (Mr. Harris, late surgeon and secretary to the Infirmary,) keeper and matron, and three male and three female assistants ; and may be visited by order of a magistrate. A Chaplain regularly attends, salary £80 per annum.

#### THE BOWLING GREEN,

or Keep of the once celebrated Bedford Castle, is an extensive and lofty circular mount, situated on the north side of the river, a little below the bridge. It consists at present of a smooth

green, the margin of which is surrounded with a hedge ; the side of the mount being planted with trees and shrubs of various kinds, the beautifully varied tints of which, either mingling with, or waving over each other, on the steep acclivity, have a very grand and beautiful effect. From the descent of the mount there is a circular path which entirely surrounds it ; the contrast of which with the lively and extensive view on the Keep, renders this a pleasing spot of silent woody retirement ; and being enlivened occasionally with the stalking of the stately peacock in his rich and gaudy colours (a fit attendant on such a scene,) the whole effect is highly interesting and illusory. It is entered at the Swan Inn.

The origin of Bedford Castle may probably be traced before the Roman Invasion of Britain : but as all historical remembrances were obliterated as much as possible by the barbarous and inhuman Saxons, the earliest positive record commences soon after the Norman Dynasty. William Rufus gave the Castle to Pain de Beauchamp with the title of Baron : from which circumstance it appears, either that the Duke of Mercia, to whom it previously appertained, had excited the jealousy of the Conqueror by his continu-

ing to stand back (as we do not find him making his submission until most of the great nobles had tendered him their power) or that the place was one of such importance as to demand the presence of one of his own followers, as a means of overawing a country in which his tenure was precarious. Accordingly we find the Lords of the Keep exercising their feudal powers with such injustice and rapacity as to become the universal scourge of the inhabitants. Protected by their castle they sallied forth upon the country ; carried their lawless depredations into every quarter ; and returned, laden with their spoils, to their lofty towers and bristling battlements, where they laid them up and caroused with impunity.

During the civil war between King Stephen and Maud, Bedford Castle was frequently the scene of sanguinary conflicts, as one or the other party happened to prevail. In 1137, it was defended by the Maudites against the King in person, who, after repeatedly storming it and thirty days' continual fighting, compelled the garrison to capitulate. In 1216, William de Beauchamp, the Baron of Bedford, having joined the insurgent Barons against King John, in the support of the

glorious struggle for Magna Charta, was besieged by the royal partizans ; and after holding it a considerable time without receiving relief, was obliged to capitulate.

Faulk de Breaute, a soldier of fortune and one of the brutal and despicable creatures of King John, to whose keeping that monarch had given the castle after the capitulation of the Barons, is related to have had, in 1224, no less than thirty-five actions at law against him at one time for violently displacing the landholders and seizing on their estates. To which actions, and for various other outrages, being summoned to appear by the King's Judges holding their assizes at Dunstable ; Faulk in contempt sent an armed force, seized one of the Judges, and brought him a prisoner to Bedford Castle ; where, being besieged by King Henry III. in person, it was not until after sixty days of the most obstinate defence against all the machinery which the art of war could then produce, and having the outer and second ramparts carried by assault, that he was induced to make a surrender ; in the terms of which his life was spared by the King, on condition of giving various other castles into the hands of the monarch, and suffering the pain of banish-

ment for life. His brother, who had violently seized on the judge, was immediately hanged ; and various others who were implicated in the rebellion. The greater part of the fortifications were demolished, the stones being used for the building of the bridge ; and the remaining part restored to the possession of William de Beauchamp. Being no longer capable of answering similar purposes, it appears from this time to have fallen into neglect. The fortifications appear to have extended from the river, northward, to St. Cuthbert's Church, and westward nearly to St. Paul's.

#### CAULDWELL (ABBEY) FARM.

The remains of Cauldwell, called in 1291 Caldewell, and in 1531 Cawdwell Abbey, being at present occupied as a farm, present but few appearances of its original state. It was founded about the year 1200 by Simon de Bauscot, or Bariscot, an alderman of Bedford, for brethren of the Holy Sepulchre ; and endowed with land in Bedford and in various neighbouring parishes, as well as some in the county of Leicester, valued before the Dissolution at upwards of £160 per annum. After the suppression of the monks of its order it seems to have been inhabited

by Austin Friars, and the patronage to have fallen to the Priory of Dunstable, in which its subsequent history appears to have merged. It was seized by the King in the general confiscation, and now belongs to G. P. Livius, Esq. It stands on the south bank of the river about half a mile above the bridge by a pleasing walk known by the name of Cauldwell-walk, leading towards the village of Kempston westward from St. Mary's Church; and, though at present remarkable for little more than its antiquity, is probably yet sufficiently interesting to the student of that science to reward the investigation of the curious.

#### THE PRIORY.

The Priory (farm) is situated near the end of St. Lloyd's, at a short distance from the road; and nearly in a direct line from Harpur-street. Its present appearance is little indicative of the former esteem and sanctity of the place; consisting merely of a large and old-fashioned building, having a deep roof and windows of the usual conventional style. It was founded by Mabel de Pateshull, Lady of Bletnesho (Bletso), whose family was connected by marriage with the Beauchamps, for the the order of Franciscans or Grey Friars;

about 1290 : and appears to have been held in great estimation ; having become the burial place of various persons of considerable note. The church is said to have been large and handsome ; on the south side of the high-altar of which, the foundress was interred in an arched tomb. In the middle of the church, before the high-altar, was buried Queen Elenor under a flat stone on which was a brass image, crowned(?) ; on the north side, under a plain stone, one of the Lords Mowbray, a descendant of the Beauchamps ; and in the choir Richard Hastings, Chamberlain to King Edward III. The cloister arches are still visible ; and some part of the out-buildings, from their ancient Gothic appearance, probably formed a portion of the convent. The endowment was by no means rich ; and chiefly dependent on the prebends of Bedford and Cauldwell Priory. It stands fronting the town, in a field which is still called the priory close ; but in which a short time will probably make an important change of scene.

#### NEWNHAM (ABBEY) RUINS.

About a mile below Bedford, on the same side of the river as the castle, formerly stood

the rich and extensive Abbey of Newnham, founded by Roisia, wife of Pain de Beauchamp, Baron of Bedford, about 1165, whose son, Simon de Beauchamp, is said by Leland, to have "confirmid and performid the act of his mother," (probably being under age at the time) and to lie interred before the high-altar of St. Paul's; having on his monument the following inscription in brass:—

“ De Bello Campo jacet hoc sub marmore Simon,  
Fundator de Newenham.”\*

This abbey was endowed with large possessions; and we find in the year 1291, when the taxation of the English monasteries was ordered by Pope Nicholas IV., the valuation of Newnham was £89. 11s. 8½d.: a large income in those days. The Prior was possessed of very extensive powers and privileges; holding feudal powers and Franc-pledge in Southill, Wooton, Renhold, Sharnbrook, Cardington, Ravensden, Goldington, and Bedford by charter from King Henry I., and all other privileges similar to the burgesses of Bedford. A short time prior to the Dissolution its income, deducting all out-goings, amounted to £281. 2s. 10½d. The ex-

\* Beneath this marble Simon Beauchamp lies;  
Founder of Newnham.

tent of the Abbey was proportionate to its richness ; as the now remaining walls sufficiently show. Even the priory church has long since been obliterated ; and the only remaining feature of the least interest is the eastern gate, which is curiously flanked by a projecting wall having a battlemented top and loop-holes beneath, in all respects similar to the entrance of a castle. The road to it lies either by the river side or by a walk across the fields, leading from Castle-Street. Many portions of the wall have a very picturesque effect, set off by the various tints of the trees that have spontaneously sprung up in the spots once occupied by the sacred cloisters and the stately abbey ; and the whole scene is of a cast deeply breathing of solitude and sadness.

#### ELSTOW (ABBEY) RUINS.

The ruins of Elstow Abbey are situated about a mile south-west from Bedford ; and consist at present of a very interesting assemblage which, though of different styles and periods so as to present but an irregular idea of what the place has been, are still sufficient to evince its ancient beauty, consequence, and interest. The church, which is still used for

the parish church, is chiefly of the Saxon style, and bears evidence of having formerly been handsome. Detached from this at a short distance stands the tower: a square, lofty, and massive building. Both were until lately so completely overgrown with ivy as to render their appearance in the highest degree picturesque; and being occupied as the habitation of numerous flocks of birds of various species, the soft cooing of the pigeon, the wild creaking of the daw, and the discordant piping and chattering of the starling presented such a strange and yet harmonious variety of sights and sounds as to give the scene, on a beautiful summer's evening, a romantic and highly interesting cast. The northern entrance is by a fine old Saxon doorway in good preservation; having a triple arch with fluted, plain, and double zigzag mouldings; over which is a very singular piece of sculpture representing some saint or deity, apparently enshrined; on each side of which is the figure of a monk or prophet, seeming in the act of guard or worship: the whole is beneath a beautiful Saxon arch, ornamented with a bead moulding. The windows of this side, which alone is furnished with battlements, are of Gothic tracery. On the west side are two flat-topped Gothic doorways, the

capitals of which are unusually ornamented in a florid style. Over one of them is a very fine lancette window, and on each side at the corners of the projecting buttresses, two very singular niches with handsome canopies; apparently for the burning of tapers. Attached to the south-western angle is a small but singular Gothic building, probably the private bede-house or chapel of the abbey; the roof of which is supported on eight arches resting on one single pillar in the centre. Adjoining this is the abbey: consisting merely of a front entirely in a state of ruin; but forming two sides of a quadrangle of which the church composes a third: the centre of the building facing the east, and having a fine avenue in front towards the road. The principal feature of this, which appears to have been erected in the sixteenth century, immediately on the site and on a portion of the ancient abbey, is a very handsome doorway of the most chaste and beautiful style, having on each side a double flight of pillars; the pedestals of those below having on them shields, and of those above being carved with heads finely executed; and having open niches between them both below and above. Over the door is carved the skeleton of a deer's head, probably the arms of the founder, sur-

mounted with a pediment; and the inner door of the vestibule, which is still attached, has on it a large scallop-shell boldly cut in wood. The window frames are in good preservation; and the whole scene has an air of grandeur which must formerly have been equally beautiful and striking.

Elstow Abbey was founded by Juditha, niece of William the Conqueror and wife of Waltheof, Earl of Huntingdon; and was originally called Helenstow, being dedicated to St. Helena, mother of Constantine the Great: and, in addition to considerable rights and possessions, was endowed by Malcolm, King of Scotland and Earl of Huntingdon, (to which earldom the Barony of Bedford was held feudatory at the time,) with the third penny of certain tolls issuing out of the town of Bedford. The income at the time of the Dissolution was estimated at £325. 2s. 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. The church contains several handsome monuments and ancient remains. In the north aisle is a stone, having on it a figure of the Lady Elizabeth Harvey, (the last abbess but three) on a brass plate, with an inscription round it. W. H. Whitbread, Esq. M. P. is the present owner of the site.

## CHARITIES.

The charities of Bedford, in conjunction with the public schools, form the most striking features in its modern history ; and as these charities, though various in purpose and degree, are all of them eclipsed so entirely in the splendour of that which has the name of HARPUR for its benefactor as to bring strongly to the mind the striking yet unphilosophical idea of Milton in Satan's address to the sun :—

—————“ At whose sight all the stars  
    Hide their diminished heads.”

It will be proper in the first place to give an abstract of that which, from its extent, magnitude, and importance, has obtained the emphatical name of

### THE BEDFORD CHARITY

This princely endowment, the origin and government of which have already been noticed under the head of “THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL,” and the extension of which has been exemplified successively in “THE ENGLISH SCHOOL,” “THE HOSPITAL,” “THE PREPARATORY SCHOOL,” “THE GIRLS’ SCHOOL,” and in the further plans of “additional schools” which are

now in contemplation by the Trustees, presents a noble picture of general beneficence to all ranks and ages which, in proportionate extent and general effectiveness, is probably without a rival. Next to the PUBLIC SCHOOLS (as education is undoubtedly of greater consequence than any mere circumstantial consideration) must be reckoned those gratifying monuments of active and continual charity—“THE HARPUR-STREET ALMS HOUSES” and “THE NEW ALMS HOUSES:” speaking the silent eloquence of praise to every eye that views them, and breathing the inward voice of gratitude and love to every heart that is a partaker of their benefits. Those also having been already mentioned, as well as the kind allowance to “THE OLD ALMS HOUSES,” it remains now to point out those branches of its charities which, being regularly dispensed by the Trustees at certain portions of the year, at their proper Boards or meetings, come less under the eye of observation, and are therefore less likely to be generally known and duly appreciated.

The APPRENTICE FEES arise from the sum of £1500 annually allowed, for the purpose of placing poor children in some regular line of useful life when they have completed that

period of education supposed to be necessary to the objects they may have in view. These fees consist of premiums of £30 each, to 40 boys between 13 and 14 years of age, and of £15 each, to 20 girls between 14 and 15 years of age, who are children of persons having been inhabitant householders for the space of 10 years preceding ; or from whose decease a period of 10 years may be calculated with the time of their having previously been householders. The boys are to be apprenticed for 7, and the girls for 5 years ; they must be bound to persons of whose character and responsibility the Trustees may approve, to any such business or calling as it is usual for persons to follow ; *lace-making* particularly excepted. The premiums to be drawn at the regular quarterly meetings of the board ; and when not all required by the boys, to be allowed to an extra number of girls. The children are to be bound within six months of their obtaining them, or they are liable to be forfeited. The indentures to be drawn upon such terms and conditions as the Trustees shall think proper ; and every indenture or assignment made with the approbation of the Trustees is to be freed from stamp-duty, notwithstanding any other consideration paid or agreed upon, besides

what is provided for by the existing regulations.

**REWARDS OF APPRENTICESHIP.** These rewards consist of gratuities of from £10 to £20, as the Trustees may think proper, which are generally allowed to apprentices after completing their terms, and producing certificates of their good conduct and behaviour during their apprenticeship. The application must be made to the Trustees within three months after the completion of their apprenticeship ; and the certificates are to be signed by the master or mistress with whom they have been apprenticed, and by the minister and churchwardens of the parish in which they have resided.

**REWARDS OF SERVITUDE.** If the number of poor boys and girls be greater than the number of premiums to be allowed, the premiums are to be determined by lot ; and all those who may be disappointed of obtaining them are at liberty to let themselves at service with the approbation of the Trustees. For this purpose they are to be allowed £2 for clothing, and £3 as a gratuity on the expiration of the first year's service : after which time they are to be allowed £2 per annum

if continuing in one place during three years, and £3 per annum if it be in the same place as that in which the first year's servitude was made; and a further sum of £5 is to be allowed to those who may continue in the same place for the length of five years. They must produce certificates of the same nature as those required from apprentices.

THE MARRIAGE PORTIONS consist of a subdivision of £800 annually given as a dowry, in separate portions of £20 each, to 40 poor maidens of good fame and reputation, between the ages of eighteen and fifty; being daughters of inhabitant householders, of the same standing as have previously been described. It is required that the persons they are to marry be not of bad fame or reputation; and that neither of the parties be an apprentice, or dismissed from an apprenticeship for impropriety of conduct. These portions are dispensed quarterly at the meetings of the Board; and if more applicants attend than the number of premiums that are allowed, they are to be determined by lot; those disappointed being entitled to the preference at the next quarterly meeting. They are to marry within two months of obtaining the portion, or are liable to forfeiture, and the money is

to be paid on the day of their marriage. Poor girls being apprenticed or going to service out of the town, and thereby obtaining a settlement in a different place, do not forfeit their title to the portion ; but retain the same privilege as though they had continued to reside in it. Those not having drawn a beneficial lot, and marrying previous to the next quarterly meeting of the Board, are entitled then to receive it, if the persons they have married be not in the opinion of the Trustees objectionable according to the before-mentioned standing regulations.

**WIDOWS' PENSIONS.** On the decease of the husband, in any alms-house occupied by a man and his wife, the widow is liable to be removed if the Trustees should think proper ; and is to receive for her support, if removed from the Best Alms-houses, 10s. or if from those in Harpur-Street, 7s. weekly, and £1 annually for clothing, during her life ; or until she may be re-appointed to an alms-house, according to the pleasure of the Trustees. No person residing in any of the alms-houses is liable to any rates or assessments. They are all required to be persons having been resident householders in the town for 10 years, *then next preceding* ; and to go every Sunday,

if able, to some place of public worship in the town of Bedford : and are liable to be removed from their houses and deprived of their allowances for neglecting to do so, for misconduct, or for contracting matrimony. The appointment of a surgeon to attend them includes also medical attendance on the children supported in the Hospital : the salary is £60 per annum.

THE DISTRIBUTION TO THE POOR arises from the sum of £500 annually appointed to be given, in such separate sums to each individual as may be proportionate to their respective necessities, among such poor householders and others as have been resident in the town, at least, for a period of 10 years preceding. The time of the distribution is not regulated, but depends on the pleasure of the Trustees ; and is determined by them according to the state of the season, or as the pressure of other circumstances may seem particularly to require it. It generally takes place in the severest parts of the winter, and being distributed at the County-Hall, is usually termed *Hall-money* ; and the time is previously announced by the bell-man in the different quarters of the town.

All the before-mentioned benefactions are regulated exclusively at the quarterly meetings of the Board which are appointed to take place on the first Thursday in the months of January, April, July, and October, in every year. The applicants are to give, at least, one week's notice to the clerk of the Trustees previous to the meeting, and are to specify their christian and sur-names, with those of their parents, as well as their respective ages : and by a regulation of the Trustees are required to be in attendance at the Board previous to the hour of 11 o'clock in the morning.

Thus has this noble charity provided for its recipients a regulated scale of encouragement and reward during a course of life which may be almost termed *from the cradle to the grave*. It begins with them at an age even of infancy ; it provides them with education ; with a useful occupation in life ; it rewards them for the due use of those advantages ; it assists them with various advantages for themselves and children, during the term of life ; provides them an asylum in distress and old age ; and does not leave them until death. Here, therefore, it may not be amiss to introduce the eulogium, which, though placed in the cen-

tre of the New Alms-houses, is equally applicable to the general principle of the charity ; and it is devoutly to be hoped that as the foundation of a great school of industry and virtue has been laid which is capable of exercising a most important influence on every portion of its inhabitants, the Trustees may have the satisfaction of seeing those advantages crowned with that success which they are eminently calculated to produce, in the establishment of unity, prosperity, and happiness, throughout the town of Bedford : as it may fairly be asserted that few, if any, public charities have ever been conducted upon more generally equitable principles than the charity estates of **SIR WILLIAM HARPUR,**

“The friend of the friendless,  
and  
The father of the poor.”

The present Act of Parliament for the management of the Charity was passed on the 26th of May, 1826, previous to the falling in of several leases on the Charity estates. These estates, originally comprising 13 acres and 1 rood of ground, situated in the parish of St. Andrew, Holborn, and St. George, Queen-Square, in the county of Middlesex ;

but in consequence of subsequent changes being at present not more than 12 acres, 1 rood, and 13 perches, were originally let for building, at the sum of £150 per annum, the lease of which expired in 1760 ; after which it was found necessary to extend its benefits, under an Act of Parliament. In 1793 its income was augmented to nearly £5000 per annum, and another Act was passed. By the last addition, in 1827, the whole income has so increased as to afford a revenue for the current year (1830) of between 17, and £18,000, including a balance of about £5000 in the hands of the treasurer and the clerk. The different streets now standing in the different portions of the estate consist at present of Bedford-Row, Bedford-Street, Prince's-Street, Theobald's-Road, North-Street, East-Street, Lamb's-Conduit-Street, Green-Street, Harpur-Street, &c., with various courts and yards ; the whole forming a compact estate of which the boundaries are clearly and definitely established ; and in the year 1833 a still further addition will take place to the income by the further expiration of leases : thus holding out unlimited expectations of the increase of its beneficial institutions, whether for the promotion of learning among other classes of the community than those already provided for,

or for the promotion of industry, virtue, or religion, as occasion may require.\*

The possessions of the Charity in Bedford, in addition to its already mentioned public buildings and endowments, consist (in 1830) of various estates in different quarters of the town, producing a rental of £146. 17*s.* 4*d.* per annum : being mostly let to poor persons at a low rent. Some of these are leasehold held under the Corporation for a term of 99 years, of which 73 are unexpired ; and for which the sum of £94. 17*s.* 6*d.* is annually paid by the Charity. Harpur-Place with its neigh-

\* One of the most obvious of these appears to be the establishment of a sort of *Operative Institute*, or school of instruction for *Adults* of the working class ; many of whom, coming into the town for the benefit of its charities, are totally destitute of education, and consequently unable to avail themselves of any circumstances that may happen as an improvement of their condition in life : independently of which their ignorance is a great drawback to the education of their children ; who, meeting with no appearance of it at home, are naturally led to slight and undervalue it, and to direct their minds to idle and disorderly pursuits. If illiterate persons had thus an opportunity of directing their minds to some useful and speculative objects, there is no doubt it would keep many from intemperate habits and idle associations, and tend greatly to raise them in the relations both of civil and domestic life.

bourhood, which has been erected but a few years, by lease from the Trustees, is a highly respectable portion, and will ultimately produce a considerable addition to its funds.

The Trustees are appointed either by virtue of their office, or by election: thus forming two separate and independent bodies each being severally a check upon the other. By the present Act they are constituted exactly as by the last. Those by office being the Lord Lieutenant and the Representatives in Parliament for the County; the Representatives in Parliament, the Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen, Common-council, Bailliffs and Chamberlains of the Town, and the Master and Usher of the Grammar-School; and those by election consisting of eighteen other persons resident in the town, to be chosen by the inhabitants paying scot and lot, on the first Wednesday in November, annually; either at the Town-Hall or some other convenient place in the town, to be appointed by the Mayor. The election is to be by ballot: and the clerk to the Trustees is to cause public notice of it to be given in all the parish churches, and to be affixed in writing on the church doors, on the Sunday immediately preceding. The election is to

take place between the hours of 9 and 12 : the Mayor, or an Alderman, by his written appointment, is to preside ; and no Trustee can be allowed to ballot. They are required to have been resident inhabitants for three years immediately preceding that day, and to be possessed of a freehold estate in the town or county of Bedford of the clear yearly value of £20, or to occupy a house in the town at the rent of £20 per annum. They are to be elected for three years : six going out annually in rotation ; and are eligible to be again immediately re-elected. The Trustees are all required to make an oath or solemn affirmation before the Mayor or one of the Aldermen, and to subscribe it respectively with their hands, that they will " without favour or affection, truly, impartially, and honestly," execute the powers that may be vested in them by virtue of the Act ; and, if elective Trustees, that they are truly qualified according to the foregoing regulations. Any one acting as a Trustee without being qualified, or after becoming disqualified, is to forfeit £50 for every such offence : to be recovered with full costs without further proof than that he acted as a Trustee and not being able to prove his then qualification. No person can be a Trustee who is in any way a partaker

of the Charity, or appointed by the Trustees to any office of profit under it; or whose child shall have received the benefit of apprenticeship under the Act: but this does not extend to the education, college-exhibitions, or marriage-portions; which may be enjoyed by the children of Trustees. No Trustee can be a lessee of any part of the Charity estate; and every such lease or contract for the benefit of such person is to be null and void. No act of the Trustees is to be valid except at a meeting: the number of Trustees present not being less than thirteen. The Recorder, or the Mayor in his absence, is always to preside; and, if neither of them be present when thirteen Trustees are assembled, they may elect a president among themselves: the chairman to have the casting vote and not otherwise to vote. The Trustees may make additional regulations if consistent with the provisions of the Act. No regulation of the Board can be revoked unless by a majority at a more numerous meeting: notice of the intended revocation signed by the clerk being given to each of the Trustees at least seven days before. The meetings of the Trustees are to be held on the first Thursday in every month; and oftener, if occasion shall require, upon notice to

that effect being given by any six or more of the Trustees in writing under their hands, and published on Sunday immediately after divine service in each of the parish churches, at least six days before the meeting, and a copy of such notice being left at the dwelling of each Trustee at least three days before. All meetings of the Board to be held in a place provided for that purpose and belonging to the Charity, furnished with a proper repository for the common seal of the Trustees and the deeds and records of the Charity; to be kept under two locks and keys, one of which is to be in the hands of the Mayor and the other in those of the clerk, or some other person appointed by the Trustees.

Any person elected a Trustee who shall reside out of the town or neglect to act for the space of six calender months, or who may die, or becoming a Trustee by virtue of any office, or being or afterward becoming disqualified, or giving a written notice of resignation to the Mayor for the time being, or becoming incapable of acting by any means whatever, thenceforth ceases to be a Trustee; and the inhabitants paying scot and lot are required within twenty-one days after every such event, on a day to be appointed for the purpose by

the Mayor, to elect a qualified person in his place or stead, for the remainder of the term for which such person had been elected ; to the end that there may always be eighteen elective Trustees ; and the same public notice is to be given of such election as is required for every general election of Trustees.

The Trustees are to be styled "the Trustees of the Bedford Charity," and by that name are to sue and be sued in all causes ; and may purchase any lands or tenements necessary for the purposes of the Charity not exceeding ten acres, notwithstanding any law to the contrary : they are to use a common seal ; and all the property of the Charity both in Bedford and in Middlesex is to be vested in them upon trust for the use of the Charity, that they shall apply it according to the rules contained in the Act. In case of any difficulty or dispute as to the administration of the Charity, any eight or more of the Trustees may prefer a petition to the Lord Chancellor, the Lord Keeper, or Lords Commissioners of the Great Seal, who may hear the case and make an order in a summary way, which order is to be conclusive, and the expenses are to be paid by the Charity.

Any person or persons whomsoever, with the consent of the Attorney General, may prefer a petition or petitions from time to time, as occasion shall require, to the Lord Chancellor, the Lord Keeper, or Lords Commissioners of the Great Seal, against any Trustee or Trustees for any misconduct in the application of the Charity; who may cause the case to be heard and examined in a summary way, and the order of the Court of Chancery against such person or persons is to be conclusive and regularly enforced: the costs of such petition to be paid by such party and out of such funds as the court may direct.

The funds of the Charity are secured by various clauses. The buildings are to be insured from loss or damage by fire; and if the expenditure in any one year should exceed the income, it is to be liquidated by the first monies received, and the Trustees are required to lessen it so as to avoid any future excess. All surplus of the income which may remain after payment of the various salaries, benefactions, and other expenses for the purposes of the Charity, are to be invested in the names of "the Trustees of the Bedford Charity" in the purchase of shares in the public funds or Government securities: the interest or the

dividends arising from them to accumulate at compound interest until a capital of not less than 10, or more £20,000 has been formed; which capital is to be available for the purchase of such property, or the erection of such buildings, as may be requisite for the purposes of the Charity. Whenever this capital is reduced by application it is again to be reinstated and to accumulate; so that there may always be, if possible, an available capital exclusively for those purposes.

No contract is to be made which shall exceed the sum of £100 without three weeks' notice of the intention being given in each of the parish churches in the town immediately after divine service; and no person being a Trustee is eligible to such contract. Ordinary repairs however are not subject to this rule.

The Trustees are to let the Charity estates in Middlesex either by lease or otherwise. No building lease to exceed 99 years, nor repairing lease to exceed 30 years. The estimate to be made by a surveyor; and if not acceded to, four weeks' notice is to be given, for letting the estates, in the London Newspapers; and the receiver is to send the pro-

posals to the Trustees, who are to determine on them at a public meeting of which at least ten days' notice must be given in the different parish churches in the town. The business may be referred to a committee of seven persons, three of whom are to be elective Trustees; and they are to meet on the Charity estates, or within one mile of them, for the purpose of ratifying the agreements, within sixteen days of their nomination.

The leases require the estates to be insured from loss by fire; to be left in good tenantable repair; to be given up quietly at the expiration of the term; and to be subject to re-entry or possession on non-payment of the rent within thirty-days, at the most, of its being due, or for any breach or non-performance of any covenant contained in them. They are to be sealed by the common seal, and the clerk of the Trustees is to be allowed, for preparing the contracts and counterparts thereof, such sum or sums of money only as the Trustees shall approve or allow. All expenses of the Trustees on account of the business of the Charity are to be paid out of the rents and profits.

The Act prescribes that the present (in 1826) " shall (continue to) be the Grammar-School;" and that the houses occupied by the Master and Usher of the school are to continue to be their respective residences. The Trustees may from time to time make orders for erecting such additional schools as they shall judge necessary, and the Masters and assistants of the English-Schools are to reside in the houses provided for them respectively.

The statue of Sir William Harpur, in front of the Grammar-School, and the monument and tomb of Sir William and Lady Harpur, in St. Paul's-Church, are to be kept in repair. The present Act is not to affect a previous business or contract made by the Trustees, nor to operate as an indemnity for any thing previous to its passing; and a copy of it is to be received as legal evidence by all judges and justices whatever.

The accounts are managed under the direction of the Trustees, by a Receiver and a Clerk. The former is required to reside upon part of the Charity estate in the county of Middlesex, or within two miles of it. His duties are to receive the rents and profits of that part of the estate, and to account

for them annually before the Trustees; to superintend the letting and reletting of the estates as they may fall in hand; to see that they are kept in a proper state of repair; and to attend the meetings of the Board of Trustees, at Bedford, as often as occasion may require. He is to give security for his responsibility; himself in the sum of £5000; and to find two sureties who are to be respectively bound in the like sum: and the receiver and sureties are severally to swear that they are worth that amount. The salary of the present receiver (T. Gotobed, Esq.) is £400 per annum: to be increased at the pleasure of the Trustees.

The Clerk is required to reside at Bedford, in the house appointed for him by the Trustees. His duties are to attend all the meetings of the Board; to make minutes of the proceedings; and to keep regular accounts of all the business that is transacted at the different meetings. He is to receive all applications of the Alms-folks, widows, poor maidens, apprentices, servants, and others relative to the business of the Charity; and to lay those applications, at the proper times and places, regularly before the Board. He is to superintend particularly that portion of the

Charity estate situated in the Town of Bedford; and to lay a general account of the expenditure annually before the Trustees. He is required to give security by bond in the sum of £500, and to find three sureties in the penal sum of £500 each, that he shall duly perform the duties of his office; account for all the monies he may receive; and take no fee, reward, or gratuity whatever for the discharge of those duties, except his salary (£125 per annum, subject to increase at the pleasure of the Trustees) or other allowance provided in the Act, on pain of forfeiting his situation. The present Clerk is Mr. J. Whitehouse, who also holds the situation of surveyor of the estates in Bedford with a salary of £30 per annum.

The situations of Receiver and Clerk are always to be separate and distinct; and no person in the employ of or in any way connected with the one is to be eligible to the situation of the other. They are required respectively to deliver an account in writing to the Trustees, on the first Thursday in October annually, of all receipts, payments, &c., of the Charity funds, and particulars thereof, up to the 24<sup>th</sup> day of June preceding: which accounts, if approved, are to be signed by at least seven of the Trustees.

Each Trustee is to receive a copy of the account at least one month previous to its being passed ; and one month's notice is to be given in the several parish churches in the town, immediately after divine service, of the day on which they are to be passed. The accounts are to be printed at the expense of the Charity and a copy of the same delivered to every inhabitant of the town, paying scot and lot, who shall apply for it. After their being passed and printed they are to be binding and conclusive, unless they can be shown to contain an error of £100 or upwards.

In pursuance of the objects of the Trustees a part of Angel-Street and Well-Street, formerly let to tenants at will, have lately been removed ; thereby reducing the income of the Bedford estates. The following is the state of the funds up to the year ending on the first Thursday in October, 1830 :

	£.	s.	d.
Annual Rent of the estates in Middlesex	11733	0	0
Balance in the hands of Receiver & Clerk	6079	5	3
			<hr/>
Increasing revenue for the following year independent of the Bedford income	} £17812	5	3
			<hr/> <hr/>

## PARTICULAR CHARITIES.

Thomas Paradine, Gent., by deed dated 19<sup>th</sup> of November, 1606, gave £5 a year to St. Paul's Parish, for 400 years; payable out of the water-works of Broken-wharf, London: namely, 48s. to be given for preaching 8 sermons yearly, and 52s. a year to be given in weekly portions of bread to the poor. The bread is to be distributed every Sunday-Morning, after divine service.

Mrs. Ursula Boteler, by will, (ratified by Sir Thomas Boteler, her son, by indenture, dated 3<sup>rd</sup> of April, 1622, granted to the Mayor and other Trustees named) gave 20s. a year, issuing out of landed property, situated at Biddenham, for the benefit of the poor of the Town of Bedford, payable on St. Thomas's-day. The funds are applied to increase the benefits of Thomas Hawes's Charity.

Thomas Hawes, by will dated 16<sup>th</sup> of Dec., 1626, gave £16 to purchase an annuity of 20s. a year in the name of the inhabitants of Bedford, to be paid to the Treasurer of the Harpur-Charity, and bestowed annually on St. Thomas's-day among the poor of the five parishes, as the Mayor and others may think proper.

Jonas Andrews, Gent., by will dated February the 3rd, 1627, gave 40s. a year for preaching 4 sermons on 4 several holidays, and 20s. a year to the poor of the parish of St. Paul's. The money is paid by the town Commissioners, and distributed to poor widows at 6d. each by the overseers, after the respective sermons thus provided.

Mrs. Mary Paradine gave, in 1631, £400 to be laid out in the purchase of lands by the Mayor, Commonalty, and Citizens of London, and Governors of Bridewell, St. Thomas's, and Christ's Hospital, that they should pay £6 a year to the Mayor and Bailiffs of Bedford, to buy clothes for six poor men of the parish of St. Paul, to be nominated by them. It is regularly expended in the purchase of coats, shoes, and stockings for the poor as far as the funds will admit.

Mrs. Sarah Paradine, by will dated August the 21st, 1658, gave £50 to the Overseers of St. Paul's; to remain in their hands as stock in hand, to set the poor of that parish to work. This money was afterwards invested in land situated in St. Peter's Parish, producing at present about £24 per annum.

Mrs. Ann Collins, daughter of George Hawes, Gent., by will, dated March the 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1682, gave £30 per annum to the Corporation of Bedford, for the maintenance of ten poor widows of St. Paul's Parish; being ancient persons, of good character, and diligent resorters to divine worship. The assignment was made in land situated in St. Paul's and St. Cuthbert's Parishes; the funds of which are regularly distributed according to the will. (Clear present income £24.)

Thomas Hawes, by deed dated July the 25<sup>th</sup>, 1688, gave £150 to purchase lands for the use of the poor of St. Paul's and St. Mary's Parishes to certain Trustees; the annual profits of which were to be given in bread: two thirds among the poor of St. Paul's and one third among those of St. Mary's. The property is vested in the Mayor and ten Trustees, and a regular account kept of the expenditure. Present income £10.

Robert Bamford, Clerk, by will dated October the 24<sup>th</sup>, 1720, gave to the parish of St. Paul £5 a year, to put out as an apprentice every year a boy or girl belonging to St. Paul's or St. Peter's Parish; and 40s. to the poor of St. Paul's and 20s. to those of St.

Peter's annually : to be given in bread from Michaelmas to Lady-day, weekly. The annual sum of £8 is secured from an estate in the High-Street, and applied accordingly.

The above charities, with others previously noticed, are recorded on a tablet in St. Paul's Church, together with the following notice:—

“The Right Hon. John Lord Carteret gave to this church three cloths of crimson velvet, wrought with gold, for the pulpit, desk, and altar ; also a large silver flagon and chalice gilt with gold, for the communion table.”

James Harvey, M.D., of Broadley, and University of Aberdeen, in Scotland, gave also to St. Paul's, Bedford, in 1711, two handsome eighteen-branch double-tiered brass chandeliers. They are suspended from the roof, over the middle of each aisle ; and, when used, have a very beautiful effect.

Robert Welbourne, Esq., gave by will, dated August the 13<sup>th</sup>, 1716, a close of land, situated at Barton ; the rents of which were to be distributed annually, on New Year's Day, by the minister and churchwardens, or either of them, to such of the poor in the parish of St. John as they may think proper. The present rent is about £12. per annum.

## DISSENTERS' CHARITIES.

William Nichols, gave, on the 17<sup>th</sup> of June, 1797, to certain named Trustees, the sum of £400 for the purchase of land ; from the rent of which, £5 per annum was to be paid to the Pastor, and the remainder to be divided half-yearly to the poor of the Old Meeting. The present income is about £20 per annum. The estate, containing 33*a.* 2*r.* 22*p.* is situated at Thurleigh, and the funds are regularly distributed according to the will.

Mary Baynes, the 29<sup>th</sup> of June, 1730, gave to certain Trustees all her land and premises; in the parishes of St. Mary and St. John, Bedford, at Cardington and at Stagsden : the sum of £5 per annum to be paid to the minister of the congregation of Calvinistic Dissenters at Bedford ; the residue to be bestowed among the poor generally ; to such as are most needy and not partaking of any other charity. The estates are upwards of 80 acres, and the rent £58. 10*s.* ; out of which the minister of the Old Meeting receives £25 per annum ; £5 being paid to some other dissenting minister. An annual subscription of £2. 2*s.* is given to the Bedford Infirmary in the name of the minister of the Old Meeting ; and the remain-

der of the funds distributed among the poor, and expended in Sunday-Schools.

Mr. John Taylor, 30<sup>th</sup> of June, 1735, gave all his real estate, in the parishes of Eaton-Socon and Colmworth, Beds., to Thomas Vincent and Thomas Woodward, and the survivor of them, his heirs : that half the rent should be given to the Pastor of the Protestant Dissenters' meeting, and the other half to the poor of the said meeting ; with the liberty of giving one fourth to such as are not communicating members. The estate consists of about 38 acres of land ; and the rental £21 per annum.

Elizabeth Priest, by will, 5<sup>th</sup> of May, 1784, gave £400, three per-cent consols, to certain Trustees ; the dividends to be equally bestowed between the minister and congregation of Protestant dissenters at Bedford, and the minister and congregation at Cardington-Cotton-End, Beds. : £4 per annum to each of the ministers, and £1 to the former pastors' widows (if any) or to some poor minister of the gospel, and £1 to the poor members of the congregations respectively.

Stephen Odell, Gent., the 15<sup>th</sup> of December, 1788, gave his estate, in Goldington,

and his house and premises in Mill-Lane, Bedford: to apply the rent for the benefit of the Minister of the Old Meeting and the poor of the congregation. The estate contains 24*a.* 2*r.* 6*p.*: rent, about £46 per annum; one half of which is paid to the minister, and the other distributed among the poor. Rent of the house about £30 per annum.

Mrs. Martha Furness, by will, gave (on the 21<sup>st</sup> of November, 1794) the sum of £400, three per-cent South-Sea annuities, to Trustees; the dividends to be divided among poor persons belonging to the congregation of the Old Meeting, who should constantly attend and take the sacrament there.

Samuel Whitbread, Esq., by will, on the 13<sup>th</sup> of July, 1795, gave to the Trustees of the Old Meeting, out of respect to the memory of John Bunyan and for the relief of the poor of the congregation, the sum of £500; the interest of which to be annually given in bread to the poor, in quartern loaves, every Sabbath morning, from October till May.

Richard Furness, by will, dated the 20<sup>th</sup> of August, 1801, gave out of his personal estate the sum of £150 to the Deacons of

the Old Meeting, as residual legatees : the income thereof to be expended in bread for the poor of the congregation, at their discretion. The sum of £7.10s. is thus annually distributed.

Edward Wells, by will dated 15<sup>th</sup> of March, 1804, gave to the Trustees of the Old Meeting, after the decease of his wife, £500 ; to be invested in Government securities. The dividends to be laid out in bread, and distributed weekly, in quartern loaves, to the poor of the congregation. The income amounts to £22.10s.

John Costin, Esq., December the 18<sup>th</sup>, 1805, gave £200 to the Trustees of the Old Meeting ; the interest to be distributed among the afflicted poor, at the discretion of the Trustees. The funds were laid out in the purchase of lands : present income £9 per annum.

Mr. Graham, of Bedford, gave, by will, dated January 16, 1810, the sum of £100 (afterwards invested in navy five per-cent), to provide an annuity for the widows of the ministers of the Old Meeting : the interest continually to accumulate when not actually expended for that purpose.—A book is kept by the Deacons of the Old Meeting in which all these accounts are regularly entered.

## SOCIETIES.

The Societies of Bedford are numerous, and partake in general so much of the nature of true charities, as to deserve well to follow the foregoing head. Many of them however, being, more strictly speaking, county associations, it will be necessary only to notice them as an illustration of those effects which they are naturally calculated to produce on the moral and social character of the town. Those of a more individual and localized nature, and which are probably destined to have an important influence on the future history of the town, though at present in a comparative state of infancy, will (it is hoped) ultimately vie with some of the most illustrious of their kind.

### THE AUXILIARY BIBLE SOCIETY

was instituted in 1812: President, His Grace The Duke of Bedford; some one of whose family generally officiates in the chair at the society's regular anniversary. It is supported in the most harmonious and liberal manner both by the church and the dissenting interests; and forms an important and extensive branch of the parent association.

The secretaries are the Rev. T. S. Grimshawe, Vicar of Biddenham, and the Rev. S. Hillyard. The total sum raised by the society, to 1830, amounts to £12,606. 14s. 8d.

#### THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY

was established in 1814: President, the most noble the Marquess of Bute; vice President, the Rev. J. Webster, of Meppershall. Secretaries, the Rev. T. S. Grimshawe and the Rev. A. J. Crespin, Vicar of Renhold. This society, though composed exclusively of members of the church, has many excellent and zealous well-wishers among the other denominations, by whom its regular anniversary meetings are frequently attended.

#### THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY

was instituted in 1818; and like its parent, the Bible Society, is warmly supported both by church and dissenting members. The annual meetings of all these are held in the County-Hall; the two former about noon, the latter chiefly in the evening; at which times the Hall is usually crowded by a number of attendants of all classes, who assemble either to assist in, or to listen to, those power-

ful and interesting appeals, in the way both of argument and anecdote, which are brought forward on those occasions. Many of these are frequently of such a nature as to draw the tears plentifully and fervently from the eyes of sensibility and feeling; and to improve the heart in all those holier sympathies which benevolence and purity bestow. To the honour of the female character it ought to be observed, that in most of those meetings the preponderance is greatly on their side:—a pleasing and important picture of that public virtue and private excellence in them for which England is unrivalled; and to which, as a nation, we may doubtless ascribe the far greater portion of that christian charity which is now so universally diffused. The Secretaries are the Rev. A. J. Crespin and the Rev. S. Hillyard.

In addition to these the two following ought also to be mentioned, as excellent auxiliaries to the preceding:—THE LADIES' CHURCH MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION: Patronesses, The Hon. Mrs. Bedford, and the Ladies of W. Stuart, Esq. M. P., and F. Polhill, Esq. M. P.; and THE LADIES' PHILO-JUDEAN ASSOCIATION: Patronesses, Mrs. Livius, Mrs. Grimshawe, and Miss Pym.

**THE CHISTIAN UNION ;**

**OR HOME MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION,** was formed at Bedford, October the 31st, 1797. Its objects are to encourage the spread of the gospel on congregational principles, by the erection of chapels, providing of teachers, formation of Sunday-schools, &c., in such villages or districts of the county as appear to be inconveniently situated for the means of christian instruction ; and comprises the whole body of the dissenting interest of the county. Its annual meetings are held at the Old Meeting, generally in the spring : consisting of a morning and evening public service (the business of the society being transacted in the afternoon), and are generally crowded to excess.

**The public anniversary of THE WESLEYAN MISSIONARY SOCIETY** is held at the Methodist Chapel.

**THE LADIES' CLOTHING SOCIETY**

was instituted in 1825, for the purpose of providing the industrious poor with clothing, bedding, &c., by their subscribing one-penny weekly, in addition to the united fund of the

society. With this money materials are purchased and made up by the members into the requisite form : each member, contributing the sum of 5*s.* annually, being entitled to a presentation ticket for clothing, to the amount of 14*s.* 4*d.* once in two years ; or oftener, according to the amount of the subscription. The clothing is annually distributed in the County-Hall, about the beginning of the winter season ; and the annual value of the distribution amounts at present to about £130, exclusive of the making and the materials which are gratuitously given. This society, having become rapidly extended, is now divided into three branches, for the different parochial districts of the town ; each having a separate committee. Many ladies of the neighbouring nobility and gentry are contributors towards it.

There are also a church and a dissenting LADIES' PUERPERAL ASSOCIATION, for the benefit and accommodation of married females, of good character, in necessitous circumstances. They are supported both by annual subscriptions and donations ; and managed by a committee. The complete equipment of infant clothing is extended to the temporary accommodation of the mother ; and the number of

persons unitedly relieved may be estimated at about 100 annually. These societies are of long establishment, and prove themselves equally valuable and effective.

#### THE AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION,

though originally instituted merely for the improvement of husbandry, has been subsequently extended to the reward of diligence, fidelity, and length of servitude, among the different classes of agricultural labourers. The general objects of this society have been greatly encouraged and advanced both by the late and the present Duke of Bedford. Many of the nobility and gentry are also enrolled among its members; under whose spirited patronage the society has arrived to a very high degree of eminence. The breed of sheep in particular, has been exceedingly improved; and measures are now in operation for the same improvement of horned cattle. To the agriculturist the annual show, ploughing match, &c., which usually take place in the month of October, must be indeed a treat. The general meetings are held at the County-Hall; and the annual business, as appointment of officers, awarding prizes, &c., take place after a public dinner, which is in gene-

ral most numerously attended. The Officers for the year commencing October the 16th, 1830, are Frederick Polhill, Esq., M.P. President; and Lord Russell, Vice President. The Secretary is F. J. Budd. Esq.

#### THE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

is supported chiefly by the gentlemen of the town, assisted by the most eminent practical horticulturists and florists of the neighbourhood. The show of fruit, flowers, &c., does ample credit to the society ; and prizes are liberally awarded for all those productions of the useful or the beautiful which are capable of being cultivated with success. Cottagers' prizes are also given for the more ordinary fruits, flowers, and vegetables, raised by such persons. The spring and summer shows take place about April and July, respectively ; after which the business for the ensuing season is settled at a public dinner. This society, though popular in the town, as yet ranks none of the nobility among its members. The Duke of Bedford has lately become a subscriber, and under his illustrious patronage it will probably rapidly improve in eminence. The President for the present year is C. Short, Esq.

**THE PUBLIC NEWS AND READING ROOM**

was instituted in the year 1825, chiefly as a mode of literary association, and as a centre of communication, either of convenience or relaxation, between those gentlemen residing in or out of the town, desirous of devoting their regular or occasional hours of leisure to popular or literary conversation. Its members are consequently composed generally of the different professional classes of the town ; and, being rather on an exclusive principle, it is not calculated to have a numerous portion of subscribers. The members are elected by ballot, after being proposed and seconded ; and candidates are liable to be rejected if opposed by three members. The terms of admission are two guineas annually ; and the business of the society is conducted by a committee. It is situated near the centre of the High Street, and is open daily from 9 to 9. It has a small library attached to it. Curator, John Fion Lee, Esq., L.L.D. Secretary, the Rev. G. H. Bowers.

**THE PUBLIC LIBRARY.**

This institution was founded July, 1830, by an association of the inhabitants generally, who had long felt the want and necessity of a

public library, whether as a place of intellectual resort, literary and scientific reference, or as a store-house of knowledge and improvement for the rising generation ; which, being so amply provided with education, was left afterwards to struggle with the business of the world, without that assistance which the opening mind requires for the developement of its faculties, and consequently in a great measure to depend on chance for the discoveries and improvements connected with practical life, which might otherwise naturally arise from talent assisted with cultivation. This want, it is hoped, in a few years will be amply compensated by this institution. It contains at present nearly 1000 volumes ; and arrangements are taking place for incorporating with it the library of St. Paul's, which will nearly double the number, besides providing it with many rare and valuable works. It has a small, but rapidly increasing, museum ; and possesses a good set of maps, and several valuable philosophical instruments. It is supported by the inhabitants of the town and county generally, either by annual subscriptions or by compositions for a certain term of years : the terms of admission being 1 guinea to annual subscribers, 5 guineas to subscribers for 7 years, 10 for 15

years, and 10*s. 6d.* entrance. It is managed by a committee of 13 persons, to be annually elected by the subscribers at a general meeting; which committee meets monthly for the business of the library. Each subscriber is at liberty to propose any new work for the approbation of the committee, and to introduce a friend, not resident in the county, for the space of one month. It is held at present in part of a private building situated near St. Mary's Church, and hired for the purpose; and is open daily from 10 in the morning, to 8 in the evening. The present Secretary is the Rev. E. R. Williamson. Treasurer, J. Green, Esq.

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## TRADE AND BUSINESS.

The River Ouse being the only source which Bedford possesses of communication by water, it carries on by this means a considerable trade with the sea coast through Lynn. The distance of these places is computed at about 80 miles; in the course of which it traverses the counties of Norfolk, Cambridge, and Huntingdon; passing through many con-

siderable towns. The trade consists generally of wheat, barley, malt, wool, &c., outwards; and of coals, timber, stone, iron, &c., inwards. By means of locks the barges are enabled to come up and to unload close alongside the quays: a circumstance which adds considerably to the picturesque appearance of the river.

The staple manufacture of Bedford is thread or pillow lace, which is still carried on to a considerable extent, and occupies nearly all the female population of the working classes, notwithstanding the cheapness and perfection to which machinery has brought the cotton lace (which in wear and durability is far surpassed by that manufactured by manual operation). It is however to be regretted that, by this means, the industrious poor who were formerly able to earn a comfortable livelihood, have been reduced to such a state as to render the most toilsome application insufficient to obtain a bare subsistence: and it is devoutly to be hoped, that the wide difference between *necessities* and *luxuries* may in future be attended to by our legislature, by blending, if possible, the encouragement of labour with those financial regulations which more directly bear upon mere articles of taste and show.

Bedford is chartered to hold two weekly markets : one on Tuesday and the other on Saturday. The former has long been discontinued, unless it may be considered as changed to Monday ; on which day a weekly hog market is held in St. Mary's Parish ; and a large number of hogs usually bought and sold. The attendance at the principal market, on Saturday, is generally very considerable ; and the number of farmers and corn dealers so large, about the middle of the afternoon, as completely to impede the passage of the High-Street, in which they assemble for public business. In consequence of the want of a regular market-house, or corn-exchange, the business in this line is carried on by means of sample. The average quantity of wheat usually sold may be estimated at about 600 quarters ; 1000 quarters however being sometimes disposed of in a single day. In the meditated improvements of the town a guildhall and market house are both included : the old guildhall having been removed in pursuance of that intention.

There are seven annual fairs belonging to the town and established by charter, which are held in the following order :—first Tuesday in Lent, April the 21<sup>st</sup>, July the 6<sup>th</sup>, August the

21<sup>st</sup>, October the 12<sup>th</sup>, November the 17<sup>th</sup>, and December the 19<sup>th</sup>. These are in general merely cattle fairs, which are penned within the precincts of the town. That of April the 21<sup>st</sup>, is however counted a pleasure fair. It is held in St. Mary's Parish, and is usually attended by some little show and bustle. But the principal fair is that of October the 12<sup>th</sup>, usually called the Statute; being the day for hiring servants: and the number of holiday folks of that class who attend it from all the country round, is generally so large as completely to fill the town with noise and revel. The principal feature of the cattle fairs consists in the number and excellence of the sheep; the breed of which has been greatly improved by means of the County Agricultural Association. Horses and black cattle make but an inferior show; but the latter will probably, ere long, rise to excellence by the same spirited and liberal means. This society has also established an annual wool fair, which is held July 6<sup>th</sup>, on St. Peter's Green.

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#### COURTS, AMUSEMENTS, &c.

The municipal government of Bedford is vested in the Corporation (see page 19). The

Mayor is usually selected from among the aldermen; but not necessarily so, as the common-council-men are eligible to the office, having previously served the office of bailiff; and must be elected to fill the situation previous to their taking the rank of an alderman: but on account of this it seldom takes place, unless there is a vacancy in the usual number. The Mayor, by virtue of his office, is chief magistrate, coroner, and chairman of most of the courts, boards, &c., relating to the town; and is consequently a person of highly-important trusts. He is nominated on the first Monday in September, and assumes office on the 29<sup>th</sup> following. The members are all Trustees of the Bedford Charity, by virtue of their office; to which indeed they are fairly entitled as the representatives of the original founders. The market-houses, shops, butchery, &c., are vested in them; together with the tolls and general regulation of all fairs and markets in the town. They are empowered to make bye-laws for the enforcing of those regulations (such laws not being repugnant to the general laws of England, and to be from time to time printed and affixed in some conspicuous part of the market place, during three successive market days, before they are deemed to be of force)

and to fine any one to the amount of 40*s.* for selling goods contrary to such rules and regulations. The ancient privileges of the corporation were very extensive, and in all respects similar to those of the city of Oxford. Mayor elect for the year beginning Michaelmas, 1830, Thomas Gwyn Elger, Esq., *vice* Sir William Long, Knt. Recorder, John, Duke of Bedford.

The general state of the town, including the paving, lighting, watching, watering, &c., is superintended by a board of Commissioners appointed by Act of Parliament passed in the year 1797, intituled "An Act for the improvement of the Town of Bedford, and for rebuilding the Bridge over the river Ouse, in the said Town," and amended by a subsequent Act. The original Board is named by prescription, and associated with the Mayor, Recorder, and Representatives of the town, for the time being; and is empowered to elect other members of their own body instead of those who may cease to be commissioners. The tolls of the bridge are vested in them; and they are authorised to purchase estates and make assessments for the purposes of the Act; (which assessments are not to exceed 1*s.* in the pound on the rating of any house); and to take cognizance of all obstructions and nui-

sances whatever, either in the public ways or private alleys of the town ; and are required to make out an annual account, to be open for public inspection to all persons paying rates, on payment of 1*s.* to the clerk. The Commissioners meet at the County-Hall on the first Friday of every month for general business.

The General Quarter Sessions are held in the Shire-Hall, on the Tuesday in the first week after the 28<sup>th</sup> of December, 31<sup>st</sup> of March, 24<sup>th</sup> of June, and 11<sup>th</sup> of October. The Chairman is Sir Robert Harry Inglis, Bart. M. P.

The Town Quarter Sessions are held on the day previous to the above.

Petty Sessions for the town and county are held at the Shire-Hall every other Saturday throughout the year.

The County Court of Requests for the recovery of debts under 40*s.*, is under the jurisdiction of the High Sheriff; and is held (generally by his deputy) at the Shire-Hall, every fourth Wednesday throughout the year. Sheriff elect, for the year 1831, S. C. Whitbread, Esq. vice J. T. Dawson, Esq.

## THE BEDFORD SAVINGS' BANK

was first established in 1816 for the benefit of the inhabitants of the town and county at large, and regulated 20th Nov. 1828, by Act of Parliament. Its objects are "to afford tradesmen, journeymen, apprentices, lace makers, servants, and to the industrious and prudent in general, a secure and profitable investment on Government security, without any possiblerisk of loss from the fall of the funds, for such sums of money as they may, from time to time, be able to save." His Grace the Duke of Bedford is the President. The Trustees are mostly composed of the nobility and magistracy of the town and county ; and the managers are the Mayor of Bedford, for the time being, with most of the clergy, professional, and other respectable persons of the town and neighbourhood. The interest is fixed at the rate of £3 6s. 8d. per annum ; and the money may be deposited at the choice of the depositor in sums of not less than 1s. The time of attendance is every Saturday from 12 to 1, and from 6 to 7 in the evening. The Treasurer is T. Barnard, Esq. Quarterly meetings of the officers, trustees, and managers, to be held at the Shire Hall, on Thursday in the week after every quarter sessions for the county

## THE BEDFORD RACES

have lately become a subject of considerable interest and attraction, on account of the spirit with which many of the neighbouring nobility and gentry have come forward to support them. This has led to the establishment of a set of spring stakes ; which appear likely to acquire extensive popularity from the manner in which they have, so far, in their infancy been supported. The first spring races took place in 1829 ; and were honoured by all the rank and fashion of the neighbourhood. The occasion was closed by a masquerade, or fancy ball, which it is intended to continue regularly ; and will doubtless be a source of great fashionable attraction. The summer races are usually held about the end of August : they consist of two days' sport ; the first being usually closed by an undress or boot ball, and the second by a full dress assembly, held at the County-Hall. The race-course is situated about two miles from the town, on an extensive flat, or meadow, adjoining the Woburn and Oxford road ; and, in addition to the regular Stand, is always provided with several temporary booths for general accommodation, which are plentifully supplied with refreshments.

In addition to the race balls there is an established course of town and county ASSEMBLIES, which take place in the winter season.

Bedford has no theatre, nor any public building analogous to one except the County Hall, which is occasionally used for the purpose of scientific lectures, on application to the magistrates. The building that is at present considered as the Theatre is private property, and situated in Cauldwell Street; but is so constructed as to present, when the stage and scenery are erected, an appearance by no means out of keeping with the usual arrangements of the provincial theatre. It is opened for that purpose about three months every second or third year; and is supported by a fair portion both of public and private patronage.

The Population of Bedford in 1811 was 4605; in 1821 it was 5466; since when the town has so rapidly increased, that it now probably amounts nearly to 8000. The number of inhabitant householders is upwards of 1000. Representatives for the town, W. H. Whithbread, Esq., and F. Polhill, Esq. Representatives for the county, the Marquess of Tavistock and W. Stuart, Esq. Lord Lieutenant, the Right Hon. Lord Grantham.

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